TASAWWUF

Translated from

Maulana Allah Yar Khan's Urdu Book

DALAEL us-SULUK

by

Abu Talha

IDARAH-E NAQSHBANDIAH OWAISIAH
DAR UL-IRFAN
MUNARA, DISTRICT CHAKWAL
PAKISTAN

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

This is the English language version of the irradiating and inspiring, *Dalael us-Suluk* by the late Hadhrat Maulana Allah Yar Khan, the greatest Sufi Master of the Muslim Ummah after the Companions. No sooner had this work been published in 1965 than it had its second revised edition through the untiring efforts of Idarah-e Naqshbandiah Owaisiah and has since had ten reprints. This indicates a burning urge for spiritual bliss in consonance with the Shari'ah, and it is our hope that the English translation will extend the usefulness of the work. The arduous task of translation to which, quite frankly, I considered myself unequal, was undertaken by me with only the hope of guidance from **ALLAH**. By far, the greatest single difficulty faced in this venture was the search for precise words and expressions which could convey the true meaning of the nuances of the original text. Hence my reliance on the closest approximation, and where this also did not achieve the desired clarity, actual words or expressions have been inserted in Romanized Urdu. Nevertheless, responsibility for any incorrect rendering of real meaning is entirely mine. The footnotes by the compiler of the Urdu version, Professor Hafiz 'Abdur Razzaq, have been placed below the line.

I sincerely hope that this endeavour, **ALLAH** willing, will achieve the desired object, to impart true knowledge- as distinct from information- to the English-speaking Muslims the world over, including many at home, who find themselves at greater ease with the language. I believe the work will help to regenerate the powerful influence for good that Tasawwuf orders.

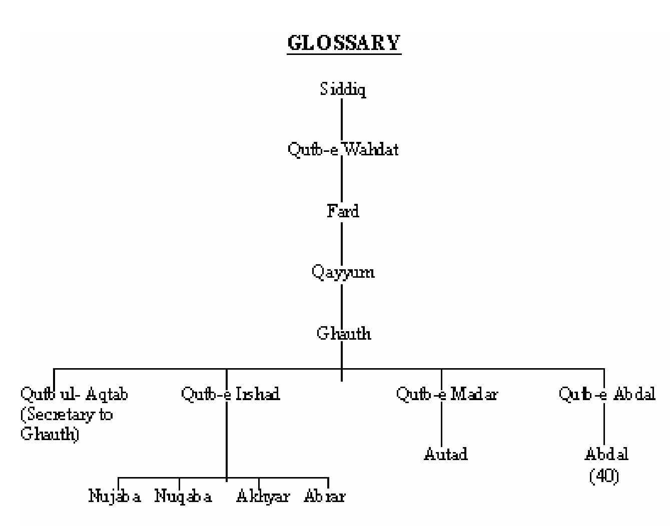
I am deeply indebted to Professor Hafiz 'Abdur Razzaq for his patient explanation of the spirit of the original text, and also to others who lent a helping hand in any way in this noble undertaking, particularly the late Muhammad 'Abdul Latif, former Session Judge, who painstakingly reviewed the script. I must also thank Yuwsuf R. 'Abdulghafoor and Muhammad Naseem Malik for their most valuable help in updating the second edition.

Abu Talha

June, 1996

Lahore, Pakistan.

GLOSSARY



Notes:

- Another group of aulia titled Maktum is not shown here.
- The four Qutb form the spiritual cabinet of the Ghauth.
- Qutb-e Irshad is concerned with the matter of Shari'ah.
- Qutb-e Madar is concerned with matter pertaining to the Divine administration of the universe, like those associated with Hadhrat Kidhar in the Quran (18:65-81).
- Qutb-e Abdal is concerned partly with the matters pertaining to both the Shari'ah and the Divine administration of the universe.
- One of the aulia from Siddiq to Ghauth must be present in all ages; others may or may not be.

PREFACE

I seek refuge in **ALLAH** from Satan, the outcast.

In the name of **ALLAH**, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

ALLAH's peace be upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the glorious Prophet of Islam, and on his Companions and his followers.

Doubts exist not only in the minds of the Muslim faithful but also among the 'Ulema- notably the exoterics- about Tasawwuf and its votaries. Often they lead to misunderstanding, as if Shari'ah and Tariqah were two separate entities, or that Tasawwuf was some obscure discipline foreign to Islam, or that it was altogether above the established laws and injunctions of our religion. To help remove these misgivings and to reassure seekers, as well as the scholar, I take the opportunity (by **ALLAH**'s Grace) of writing this work.

Although I have lived the major portion of my life as a scholar, with the avowed mission of expounding the truth of Islam and the refutation of fallacious sects – and this would appear quite removed from Tasawwuf, yet the only practical difference between the two, namely the use of the former as a media to expound the truth, and the latter to imbue people with positive faith, is that of argument perceived by the ear, and argument savoured by the mind. Nevertheless, people are amazed that a man, who until the other day, was known as a dialectician and a preacher of Islam, is not only talking mystics – zikr, Halqah, purification of the soul, and the stages of the mystic Path – but is also claiming spiritual bonds with the veteran Sufi Masters of the past. This amazement is obviously out of place in view of the Qur-anic injunction:

Is it they who apportion their Lord's Mercy? (43:32)

to which the natural reply is:

This is the bounty of ***ALLAH*** *which He gives to whom He wills.* (62:4)

The purification of the soul always formed part of the main mission of the Prophets; that is, the dissemination and propagation of the Divine Message. This responsibility later fell squarely on the shoulders of the true 'Ulama in the Ummah of the last Prophet ﷺ who, as his genuine successors, have continued to shed brave light in every dark age of materialism and blasphemy. In the present age of catastrophic confusion, the importance of this responsibility has increased manifold; of the utter neglect of Islam by Muslims has not only driven them to misery but also grievously weakened their bonds of faith in **ALLAH** and the Prophet ﷺ. The decay in their belief and consequent perversion in their conduct has reached a stage that any attempt to pull them out of the depth of ignominy and the heedless morass of faithlessness, attracts grave suspicions and apprehensions

rather than a positive will to follow the Shari'ah, to purify the souls and to reform within. The Qur-anic verse: *Layer upon layer of darkness*... (24:40) provides the nearest expression of their present state.

ALLAH has taken upon *Himself* the responsibility to uphold the Truth. It is not within *His* infinite Mercy to let mankind (*His* dearest creation) grope in the murky shadows of ignorance and misery. Therefore, in every age, *He* raises *His* chosen servants to support the truth and lead mankind to salvation. There is no parallel in history of the way the learned Sufis carried out this task with the utmost sincerity and dedication.

The sole method of imparting knowledge, ensuring spiritual development and purification of the soul, used by the learned Sufis, is to project their inner light towards disciples. This is called ilqa and in'ekas in Sufi terminology and is the practical aspect of Tasawwuf which depends upon the company of a Sufi master. According to Mujaddid Alif Thani, "Tasawwuf is the science of spiritual feelings and stages, which cannot be literally represented in overt literature or explained by word of mouth."

Therefore, it is important to introduce to literary circles the broad features and reality of Tasawwuf, for what is represented today as such does not have the remotest relationship with it. It is because of this that true Tasawwuf, the one having its firm foundation in the Book and the Sunnah, is viewed with suspicion. It is hoped that this humble attempt on my part will initiate the Muslims of all classes to apply a corrective to their thoughts and actions, in the interest of eternal bliss. This book is the outcome of a realization of this sacred duty. *My welfare is only in **ALLAH**, in Him I trust and to Him I return (repentant).* (11:88)

Allah Yar Khan

Chakrala, District Mianwali, Pakistan

25 October 1965 / 1st Sh'aban 1385 A.H.

CHAPTER-I

REALITY OF TASAWWUF

What is Tasawwuf?

There is no doubt that Tasawwuf is an important branch of Islam, irrespective of whether the word itself is derived from the Arabic word suf (literally wool), or its origin is traced to safa. It has its foundation in sincerity, both in conduct and in intention, and its ultimate aim is communion with **ALLAH** and attainment of *His* pleasure. The study of the Quran and the Ahadith and the everyday life of the Holy Prophetﷺ and his faithful Companions, provide unmistakable support to this reality.

During the time of the Prophetﷺ and his Companions, the terminology for various branches of the Faith like Tafsir, Canon, Fiqh, Philosophy, etc., had not come into use, despite their existence in principle and in spirit-these were compiled under the present titles at a later stage. Likewise, this important branch of the Faith also existed at that time, inner purification was a part of the Prophet'sﷺ mission and the lives of the Companions provided a model. Yet its compilation as an independent branch of knowledge was undertaken afterwards. Against the exalted appellation of Companion, other terms like scholars, commentators, traditionalists, jurists, and sufis, being of little consequence, were not applied to the Companions. The lives of those who subsequently showed singular devotion to this branch, and became its torch-bearers, specialists and zealous followers, provided the pristine example of piety, asceticism, sincerity and simplicity. By their habit of taking simple food and wearing coarse garments of wool (suf), they were known as sufis and the branch of the Faith pertaining to their way of life came to be known as Tasawwuf. In the Qur-an it has been referred to as Taqwa, Tazkiyah (Purification), Khashiat - **ALLAH** (Fear of **ALLAH**) and in the Hadith as Ihsan, which has been regarded as the essence of the Faith. Full details may be seen in Chapter III under Hadith-e Jibril. In short, Tasawwuf, the (mystic) Path, Ihsan and sincerity are the different names of the same reality.

There are two distinct facets of Prophethood, both equally important, as enunciated in the Qur-an:

> *Truly **ALLAH** has shown Grace to the believers by sending to them a Messenger of their own, who recites to them His revelations and causes them to grow in purification and teaches them the Scripture and wisdom.* (3:164)

The first, external, or the outward, aspect pertains to the recitation of the Scripture, its teaching and exposition; the second, internal, pertains to inward purification. The pious souls who inherited an ample share from the former were called the commentators, the traditionalists, the jurists and the preachers, while those blessed with both attained the high offices of the Divine elite, 'Abdal, Qutb, Ghauth, Qayyum, etceteras. It must be remembered that all these attainments emanate from the same

fountainhead, the Book and the Sunnah, which constitute the only connection between **ALLAH** and *His* faithful believers and in it alone lies the ultimate salvation. Right from death, to the resurrection, the basis of all reckoning will be the Book and the Sunnah. That is why all learned sufis are unanimous in asserting that a Shaikh or a guide must have a thorough understanding of both. If someone is seen flying about, but his practical life runs counter to the Book and the Sunnah, he cannot be termed a wali; instead, he is an impostor or charlatan, because perfect obedience to the Prophet ﷺ is indispensable to any claim of Divine Love as enjoined by Him:

> *Say (O Muhammad, to mankind): If you love **ALLAH** follow me, **ALLAH** will love you.* (3: 31)

Only those of **ALLAH**'s bondsmen proved true followers of Sunnah who kept in view the importance of both aspects of prophethood, Outward as well as Inward, and in their preaching and dissemination of the Message, down the ages, never lost sight of purification of the soul. Every excellence, and all exalted hierarchical offices are attained solely through total adherence to the Prophet ﷺ. This is certainly the foundation stone of Tasawwuf.

Rudiments of Sufi Knowledge

To determine the rudiments of a certain branch of knowledge, a critical examination of its particular attributes is imperative. Tasawwuf deals with the states of its votaries but not the states themselves. From this point of view, its subject matter is the particular conduct which either falls short of, or results in, nearness to **ALLAH**. For example, the postulate of medical science is the human body, its well being and disorders, and not the body itself. So, in sufi knowledge the states of its devotees will have to be examined with reference to *His* nearness or otherwise.

Definition of Sufi Knowledge and its Purpose

Tasawwuf is that knowledge which leads to the perception of esoteric and exoteric states, the purification of souls and the purgation of morals to help attain eternal salvation- **ALLAH**'s Nearness and Pleasure. Its rudiment is the purification, the purgation and the reformation of the inner self while its ultimate purpose is the attainment of eternal bliss.

The definition, postulate and purpose of Tasawwuf have been explained because these three aspects manifest the glory of every knowledge. It is our foremost intention to demonstrate the right place of Tasawwuf and the Path in Islam, leaving no room for anybody to ignore it on the mere presumption that it is a branch of knowledge based on Zann. It is a plain fact that there are thousands of ordinances in other branches of the Faith, having similar basis. To accept those ordinances and reject Tasawwuf on this very account and be hyperbolic in expressing this belief, is nothing but intellectual dishonesty. In fact, it amounts to bearing enmity with sufis, i.e., with the aulia, for

which the following Divine warning conveyed through the Prophet ﷺ must be remembered:

> He who harbours enmity with *My* wali, *I* proclaim war on him.

Therefore the antagonists of Tasawwuf should better be prepared to face the consequences!

It is an established principle that someone who is not an expert in a particular field has no right to comment on it or on its specialists. We see that the philosophers, who are rightly proud of their knowledge are obliged to confess while discussing kashf:

> This is beyond the scope of human intellect. Those gifted with supernatural understanding are exceptions.

What is not Tasawwuf?

Kashf and karamah are not a criteria for Tasawwuf, it is neither an avenue for prosperity in commerce, nor hocus-pocus, nor talisman trading, nor a means of winning cases in the courts of law. Tasawwuf has also nothing to do with prostration on tombs, the provision of mantles or kindling of lamps thereon; nor is the prediction of the future Tasawwuf. To call the aulia, in absentia, (with the belief that they hear such a call) or believe that they have the power to deliver mankind of their sufferings is not Tasawwuf. It is not a warrant that a single Tawajjuh of a mentor will edify and enlighten a disciple and saddle him to the straight path without endeavour and due regard to the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah. Neither veracity of kashf and ilham in the process is guaranteed, nor ecstasy, trance, dance, or music are Tasawwuf.

The irony is that all of these absurdities are taken as essentials of Tasawwuf, while in fact they are its contraries.

CHAPTER-II

DIFFERENT VIEWS ON TASAWWUF

The Rejecters

Tasawwuf is rejected under various pretexts. The favourite ground is that it is an heresy or an innovation. This aspect will be discussed later at an appropriate place to determine whether Tasawwuf is heresy or, inversely, it is ingrained in Sunnah and is the very quintessence of Islam. Suffice it here to say, in principle, that those who reject Tasawwuf are neither the Mujtahid having exalted genius, deep learning and remarkable sharpness of intellect (that their rejection is taken as an authority) nor have they any supremacy over true theologians and erudite sufis (that their opinion is accorded any weight). According to Maulana Ahmad ‘Ali Lahori (d. 1964 C.E.) the rejecters of Tasawwuf are the thieves and bandits who wish to divorce one of the vital parts of the Faith. It is indeed appropriate to brand them as heretics rather than stigmatise millions of pious souls right from Imam Hassan Basri down through the ages. Such rejecters grope in mere ignorance. Declares **ALLAH:**

No, but they denied that, the knowledge which they could not understand... (10:39)

They would have never dared reject this reality, had they heeded the following Divine Commandment:

(O man), pursue not that whereof you have no knowledge... (17:36)

The Upholders

Those who accept the reality of Tasawwuf are divided into two groups. The first group, though very small, not only believes in, but also lives up to its norms. They are indeed the righteous, in complete harmony with the Divine declaration:

Few of my bondsmen are thankful. (34:13)

They are found in every age and have been the beacon rays of this blessed aspect of Prophethood, throwing their light the world over.

The second group subscribes to its existence, in principle, but rejects it in practice. To them, Tasawwuf is confined to bookish knowledge, anecdotes of esoteric mystics, and occasional dips into the ecstatic moods. They do not look for an accomplished guide to the practical knowledge of the Path who would exhort them to follow the Sunnah, and if they came across one, instead of trusting him, they ridicule him.

Listless inertia lies under such stance; in fond hope, they wish to attain the stages of the Path by mere gloating in idle talk. They are for all practical purposes, the rejecters of true Tasawwuf, and at times they echo slogans as if Shari'ah and Tariqah were two separate entities. This free lancing is nothing but an easy escape from the Qur-an and the Sunnah.[1]

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[1] Those who deny karamah are divided into a number of groups. One indulges in outright right rejection and is averse to the very idea of piety and celebrated religious personalities. Another believes in the karamah of bygone saints, but rejects those of the contemporary saints. According to Shaikh Abul Hassan Shazli (d. 656 A.H./1258 C.E.), they resemble the Children of Israel who accepted the Prophethood of Musa عليه السلام without seeing him, yet rejected Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for no other reason than malice, animosity and callousness. Yet another group generally acknowledges the presence of the aulia in their age, but do not accept a particular person for one reason or another. They are indeed the unfortunate ones who shirk direct knowledge and ready guidance. (Raudh ar-Riyahin by Imam Yaf'ai quoted in Tabaqat al-Kubra by 'Allama 'Abdul Wahhab Sh'arani Urdu translation p: 39)

CHAPTER-III

EVIDENCE ON TASAWWUF

Hadith-e Jibril

In all the books on the subject, Hadith-e Jibril has been accepted as the central core of the fundamentals of the Faith, which is said to comprise of Islam, Iman and Ihsan. In the last part of this Hadith, Ihsan has been described in these words:

> Jibril asked about Ihsan. The Holy Prophet explained: "Worship **ALLAH** as if you see *Him,* for if you see *Him* not, yet *He* sees you." The Prophet turning to 'Umar asked if he knew who the seeker was? Hadhrat 'Umar replied that **ALLAH** and *His* Prophet knew better. The Prophet explained that he was Jibril who had come to expound their Faith.

Explaining this Hadith, Shah 'Abdul Haqq Dehlawi (a celebrated traditionalist, d. 1052 A. H. / 1642 C. E.) quotes Imam Malik (d. 199 A.H. / 814 C.E.):

> Whosoever, without adequate knowledge of Fiqh acquired Tasawwuf would then turn infidel and inversely a sinner. He who acquired both became an accomplished believer.

He goes on to explain in his 'Ash'at al-Lam'at Sharah al-Mishkat p: 45:

> Listen, that the foundation of the Faith and its consummation rest on Fiqh, Philosophy and Tasawwuf. Hadith-e Jibril refers to these three components: Islam implies Fiqh because it comprises commandments of the Shari'ah, vis-à-vis, human conduct. Iman represents the beliefs, the basic propositions of philosophy, and Ihsan symbolises true Tasawwuf, which implies sincerest devotion towards **ALLAH**. The gist of the sayings of the great sufi Masters is nothing but Ihsan. Tasawwuf and scholasticism are complementary, because one without the other, just as Fiqh without Tasawwuf is meaningless. The reason is that the Divine Commandments cannot be judiciously known without the knowledge of Fiqh, which in turn is incomplete without Tasawwuf because without sincerity, symbolised by Tasawwuf, human conduct even if governed by Fiqh, does not merit Divine assent. Of course, both these without Iman are of no consequence whatsoever. The best analogy is that of the human body and the spirit, one without the other remains incomplete.

Note: Tasawwuf is an integral part of the Faith. Such a part essentially reflects the whole, the rejection of Tasawwuf therefore, amounts to the denial of the Faith itself.

A religious scholar uninitiated in Tasawwuf and the Path can neither be a spiritual successor of the Prophet ﷺ nor his deputy.

> The spiritual successor of the Prophet ﷺ will be the person who has acquired all the three aspects of religion as mentioned in Hadith-e Jibril, is well versed in the Book and the Sunnah and endeavours in the canons of mystic knowledge and guidance of its seekers.

Tafhimat p: 13.

Notes:

- The Hadith "The 'Ulama are the successors of the Prophets ...." refers to those who acquired these three aspects because the Holy Prophet's ﷺ words, "It was Jibril who had come to expound your Faith..." proves that the religion, for which **ALLAH** sent Jibril to the Prophet ﷺ, is comprised of three parts: Islam, Iman and Ihsan. Islamic mysticism has been referred to as Ihsan here.

- If it is accepted that Tasawwuf is heresy, it will also have to be conceded that heresy is an integral part of the Faith. Given this contention, the whole Faith becomes heresy.

The Purpose of Raising Prophets

Prophets are raised for three purposes:

(1) To correct, beliefs.
(2) To reform human conduct.
(3) To imbue sincerity in both.

The fundamentalists ('Ulama-e 'Usool) fulfill the first aspect, jurists the second, and sufis the third.

Tafhimat-e Ilahiyah p: 130

Tasawwuf is to Faith as the Spirit is to the Body

> By the Being who controls my life, the third aspect is very subtle and fathomless as a source of Shari'ah objectives, and is like the soul in a body or meaning in a word.

Tafhimat

Notes:

- This aspect is named as Ikhlas (sincerity) and Ihsan which is like the spirit of Shari'ah as a whole. As the body is useless without spirit, so are the beliefs and conduct without sincerity.
- Without Tasawwuf, neither Shari'ah nor faith can survive, as has been amply illustrated above by one of the greatest sufi masters and traditionalists, Shah Wali Ullah Dehlawi.

Tasawwuf is Obligatory

Thna Ullah Panipatti in his famous Tafsir-e Mazhari (vol: IV, p: 24) describes the position and importance of Tasawwuf while commenting on the following verse:

> *And the believers should not all go out to fight (in the way of* ***ALLAH****). Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth that they (who are left behind) may gain sound knowledge in religion, and that they may warn their folk when they return to them, so that they may beware.* (9:122)

> The attainment of knowledge termed as 'Ilm-e Ladunni (knowledge from *His* Presence) by the sufis is obligatory, for its end result is the cleaning of the heart from its vain impulses and its absorption in perpetual observation. Purification of the soul from moral ailments such as arrogance, conceit, jealousy, avarice, weariness in Divine worship, sensuality, hypocrisy, etc., and replacing them by the attainment of high moral virtues, e.g. repentance, acquiescence to the Will of **ALLAH,** gratitude, fortitude etc., is essential. There is no doubt that the said moral ailments are, for a believer, deadlier than the sins he commits with his physical body while the virtues listed above are of greater significance than Salah, Fasting and Zakat because any kind of worship devoid of sincerity is of no consequence. And it is this sincerity which is the other name of Tasawwuf.

Imam Ghazali's Opinion

> Like all other branches of obligatory knowledge of Islam, the attainment of mystic knowledge is also obligatory. It pertains to the states of the heart such as sincere trust in **ALLAH,** *His* fear, and surrender to *His* Will.

T'alim al-Mut'allimin, p: 2.

Note: According to Imam Ghazali, (a distinguished champion of Tasawwuf- d. 505 A.H. /1111 C. E.) sufi knowledge is obligatory. Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanvi (d. 1363 A.H. /1943 C.E.) in his at-Takashshaf 'an-Muhimmat at-Tasawwuf p: 7, also held the acquisition of sufi knowledge as obligatory.

‘**A**llama Shami, while explaining the states of the heart concludes in his Durr-e Mukhtar vol: I:

> The attainment of knowledge which enables a true believer to get rid of moral ailments is obligatory for him.

Tasawwuf Among the Fundamentals

According to Tafsir-e Jamal (vol: I, p: 497), “Faith does not accept any change. It is unalloyed Tauhid and Ikhlas (sincerity), which were sheet-anchor for all the Prophets عليهم السلام”

Note: This proves that Tasawwuf is among the fundamentals of Islam and comprises sincerity and Ihsan. Without sincerity neither Tauhid nor faith and practice merit Divine assent.

The Sunnis Solely Depend on Shari‘ah and Tariqah

Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz Dehlawi (one of Shah Wali Ullah’s illustrious sons and a renowned traditionalist and commentator) writes:

> The Sunnis rely solely on Shari‘ah and Tariqah and regard them as the only sources of excellence and nobility.

This points, in no uncertain terms, to the fact that those who reject Tasawwuf are not Sunnis. The sufi Masters, who have been distinctly inspired, have inherited Tasawwuf and belief therein from the Book and the Hadith and have been without exception, unanimous in their views; this indeed is the common creed of all sufi veterans. Of course, it is a duty that often prompts them to cure the general apathy tormenting the masses.

Tasawwuf Proved through Twatir

Tasawwuf and the (mystical) Path are proved from Twatir of a large group of righteous men, unparalleled in their erudition and conduct, piety, asceticism and fear of **ALLAH**. To agree on a fallacy is nearly impossible and inconceivable for such a group.

Analysis of Hadith-e Ihsan

> The word Ihsan occurring in the Hadith, had a pointed reference to those verses of the Qur-an in which this word occurs. These verses enunciate that Ihsan comprises Iman and Islam, i.e., practices, the morals, the states (of the sufis).

Mirqat vol: I p: 59

According to Faidh al-Bari, vol: 1, p: 149, "Ihsan encompasses the states of the sufis as well as their knowledge. To witness realities, as a result of enlightenment of the heart, is just like a visual observation. It is a state which constitutes an enduring attribute of the devotee as distinct from his knowledge."

The above explanation of Faidh al-Bari shows that Ihsan or Tasawwuf and the Path are not confined to knowledge. Its routine study as knowledge does not make one a mystic on the same analogy that one does not become a Namazi (one who regularly prays), a Saim (one who fasts), or a Haji (a pilgrim) simply by acquiring knowledge of Salah, Saum or Hajj. These are the actions, or practices, as distinct from knowledge; this precisely is the case with Tasawwuf and the Path.

The spiritual states issuing out from the bosom of an accomplished sufi illuminate the seeker's heart. There exists no terminology to describe these states in their true perspective. The books on Tasawwuf and the Path can provide knowledge to a certain extent but the mystic states, the real motif, cannot be acquired without the Tawajjuh of an accomplished sufi. As an acknowledgement of Divine Grace, I gratefully extend an open invitation to those seeking *His* nearness to come to me. Insha-**ALLAH**, they shall not be disappointed.

The denial of Tasawwuf and the Path is not due to any scholarly or rational reasons, but stems from ignorance, obduracy and animosity. Scores of verses in the Qur-an provide its basis, which have been quoted by the traditionalists to prove its authenticity. The explanation of these verses is contained in numerous sayings of the Prophet ﷺ as well as the precepts of the sufi Masters. Principles aside, even the minor details of Tasawwuf derive their strength from the Book and Hadith. It can be said, without fear of refutation, that the various ways of the sufis and their line of approach explaining their precepts and practices, vis-à-vis, the outcome or the end result, both in principle and in detail, are supported by categorical injunctions of the Qur-an as well as Hadith, as follows later.

The Islamic beliefs, the details of Fiqh, the practices, the ethics and the various forms of worship, constitute the infra-structure of Islam, while its heart and soul lie in sincerity or Ihsan, another name of Tasawwuf and the Path. For example all the jurists are unanimous that a fast is not broken by back-biting, that is to say, the structure of this worship remains intact as a matter of law, but authentic Hadith declares that back-biting destroys the very spirit of Saum. In this case the fast will be of no consequence just like a body without a soul- Tasawwuf paves the way to these realities. Therefore, the maulvi (a religious scholar) symbolises the precept and the body while the sufi represents the practice and the soul. The rewards and retributions of the dead in Barzakh, which the maulvi shall witness only in the Hereafter, are observed by the sufis while in this temporal existence. Whatever the former sees in a dream, the latter sees through kashf while awake and that is why he has a degree of semblance with the Angels.

> Hadhrat Jabir quotes the Prophet, "Hymning *His* praise will become natural with the dwellers of Paradise as a reward, just as breathing is to you."
>
> al-Mishkat p: 488.

This is exactly the state the sufis experience in their method of zikr termed as Pas Anfas (guard every breath). Hadhrat Jabir's Hadith provides the basis and proof of this method. The Hadith about Jibril's first visit (at Mount Hira) hints at a certain state of suffocation as experienced by the Prophet. The Prophet had said that Jibril pressed him while embracing, to an extent that he felt the throes of death. This state is normally experienced in suffocation or choking. When the Divine lights descend at a devotee engaged in zikr, he finds himself under pressure and suffocation.

Here is a quotation from Faidh al-Bari (vol: I, p: 149-150) pertaining to recitals, sufi practices, connections and various Sufi Orders:

> The word Ihsan covers the entire range of virtues, be it recitals or sufi practices. The former pertains to formulae emanating from the Prophet, while the latter comprises the Dharb (emphatic recitals of *His* name so as to cause minor concussion of the heart) and states described by the sufi Masters. The connection, in sufi terminology, is a particular one, distinct from Creator and creation; anyone endowed with it is called a man of Nisbat (connection) and there are four major Orders in Tasawwuf: Suharwardy, Qadiri, Chishti and Naqshbandi. We are linked with the first one for the last ten generations without a break. The commands and prohibitions, promises and threats passed down to us in Shari'ah. To act on them and to be absorbed by them is Tariqah. At this stage all practices are completely identified with the Faith. This was the state of our pious precursors, but today we find only precepts without practice, faith without physical certification. There are so many reciters of the Book who are imprecated by the Book itself. To be able, faithfully, to follow the way shown by our ancestors will be the real success. This goes to prove that Shari'ah and Tariqah are not two separate entities as generally believed by the masses.

Elaborating the difference between the words and their meanings, the author continues (vol: I, p: 304):

> I am not one of those who depend solely upon words to draw conclusions in matters pertaining to the Faith. To me the real meaning lies in what has been inherited by the Ummah and accepted by its pioneers for they are the torch bearers and real guides of the Faith. We trust them fully and brook no doubt about them.

The glorious Faith has been handed down to us in a narrative form. At the same time, a group of people having deep insight into the real meaning of these words continued to exist throughout the ages. Besides, they provided the practical example. This age-old practice is the quintessence of the Faith. Full trust therein constitutes the real faith and it is this very faith which has reached us through the four schools of juristic thought on the one hand and the four Sufi Orders on the other. The Sunnis rely solely on these two spheres of Prophethood. If we make undue allowance in the matter of interpretations, it will no longer be a Faith but only unbridled egoism. The correct interpretation of the Faith recounted over the generations will, therefore, depend on age-old and well established practice by the majority.

There are, however, vast contradictions in the matter of precept and practice. High claims of knowledge that are bereft of practice, such knowledge is like a barren tree. To quote the great master Jami:

> Should you aspire for knowledge, be mindful of practice; for knowledge without practice is a deadly poison.

As regards faith, it is a confession which, as a rule must be supported by genuine testimony. In the absence of such a testimony, the confession is of no consequence and the one making it is declared a liar. Any confession of faith must therefore be authenticated by practice, which is the only yardstick; otherwise it will be a farce. It is unfortunate that Muslims, by and large, are the victims of this contradiction.

What is Faith

> "Jibril came to expound to you the Faith", so that you are made wise in the matter of beliefs and practice both inward and outward.

'Umdah tul-Qari vol: I, p: 339.

The famous Hadith-e Jibril expounds three branches of knowledge:

Firstly, beliefs- which is dogmatic theology. The second is commands and prohibitions and the understanding thereof- this is Fiqh. The third pertains to inner manifestations and contemplations which is Tasawwuf. These three constitute the Faith as a whole, Ihsan is the heart and soul of Tasawwuf, which is another name of singular devotion or sincerity. This is exactly how the accomplished saints of Islam defined Tasawwuf.

Analogously, the religion of Islam is like Salat-e Witr having three rak'at.

- The first - Iman (honest confession of the Faith).
- The second - Islam (the oral proclamation of this confession).
- The third - Ihsan (sincerity).

Only the third component would complete the Witr, but it would not be enough by itself unless the first two are combined with it. According to ‘Allama Qurtabi, Hadith-e Jibril constitutes the fountainhead of Sunnah. ‘Ayyadh said that this Hadith includes all invocations, all forms of worship (inward, as well as, outward) and religious practice, sincerity of the body and the soul. Shaikh al-Hind (Maulana Mahmud al-Hassan, the most celebrated scholar of the Indian sub-continent of his time), said that Imam Bukhari’s explanation of this Hadith aims at highlighting the fact that its contents, namely the principles and the ramifications, the practices, Iman, Islam, Ihsan, and the moral codes are all components of the Faith. The word Bashashat (delight) occurring in the Hadith pertaining to Caesar of Rome quoted later, means Ihsan, which implies that anyone endowed with the delight of faith has indeed been blessed by Him, and faith, with all its sweetness, lies embedded in his heart. It will not be incorrect to infer that he shall not turn a renegade. One can hardly retain one’s faith if not blessed with such an understanding.

Imam Rabbani writes in his Maktubat (Epistles) that once the meditation Fana fi-**ALLAH** and Baqa bi-**ALLAH** is well established, one surely dies on Faith. The word ‘Bashashat’ in the said Hadith has led the Imam to make this surety conditional upon constancy.

‘**A**llama Qastlani regards this Hadith as comprehensive. The first part i.e., “... worship **ALLAH** as if you see *Him*”*,* points to the manifestations and vision of Divinity, while the second part, i.e., “... If you see *Him* not, yet *He* sees you”, refers to meditation.

This in fact points to the two states of a seeker. Some are blessed with kashf who start observing the Divine Refulgence, the Angels, the spirits, while others do not, but their spiritual status remains unaffected by this difference of states.

The historical background of Hadith-e Jibril further enhances its importance. Jibril had come in the guise of a man shortly after the return of the Prophetﷺ from Makkah, after his last pilgrimage, when he was nearing the end of his temporal existence. The religion had, by then, been perfected and all commandments revealed. In a single sitting, Jibril narrated the gist of the Faith, as is evident from the Prophet’sﷺ comment, “He came in order to teach you your religion.” This manifests the very aim of Hadlth-e Jibril, i.e., in a single meeting the essence of the Faith was placed before the Prophetﷺ to help reinforce and strengthen its commandments, with a dominant note at its three aspects. Just as Salat-e Witr is not performed with only two rak‘at, the religion will not be complete without its third component, i.e., Tasawwuf. However, there are two types of attitudes with regard to Tasawwuf. A group of people do not practice it, they are just like those who do not offer their prayers: Shari‘ah regards them as sinners. Yet there are others who disavow it. This amounts to the rejection of one third of religion; rejection of a part, as a rule, means rejection of the whole. We can only pray for such people.

May **ALLAH** show them the light!

Another commentary on Hadith-e Jibril in Sharah 'Aqidah as-Safarini, vol: I, p: 430:

> The sum total of this Hadith is that the Faith and its adherents comprise three groups, as announced by the Prophet ﷺ. The first is represented by the word Islam, the second by Iman, and the third by Ihsan. Anyone who excelled in all three, indeed, touched the zenith. This classification of the Ummah into three groups has been referred to in the Qur-an in these words:
>
> *Then We gave the scripture as inheritance to those whom We elected of Our bondsmen. But of them are some who wrong themselves and of them are some who are lukewarm and of them are some who outstrip (others) through good deeds by **ALLAH**'s leave. That is the great favour.* (35:32)

A Muslim who (after embracing Islam) fails to abide by its essentials has indeed wronged himself. Lukewarm is the one who obeys the commands and abstains from the prohibitions. He is just an ordinary believer, while the third category is that of a true believer who worships **ALLAH** as if he sees *Him* or inversely is fully convinced of *His* seeing him.

ALLAH's Nearness through Supplemental Worship

The Prophet ﷺ quotes *Him*, "The nearness attained by *My* bondsman through obligatory worship is unique. Then he continues to draw near to *Me* through supplemental works until *I* begin to love him. And when *I* love him, *I* am his ears so he hears by *Me* and his eyes so that he sees by *Me*." A great saint Hadhrat Anwar Shah while discussing this Hadith in Faidh al-Bari writes,

> When Imam Zahbi came across this Hadith while compiling his Mizan-e E'itedal, he wailed, "Had I not been over-awed by the authenticity of al-Bukhari (containing this Hadith) I would have adversely commented on it." Shaikh Anwar Shah Kashmiri remarks, "Glorified be **ALLAH**! Imam Zahbi completely ignored logic. When the Hadith is correct (obviously, because it is contained in al-Bukhari) it should have been readily accepted as such." It is always advisable to entrust a problem that is beyond one's comprehension to those who know, rather than venturing a comment. However, the 'Ulama who are content with the exoterics of religion explain the meaning of this Hadith thus:
>
> All the body organs of the bondsman become subservient to *His* Will. With this state, it will be correct to assert that he hears for the sake of **ALLAH** and also sees for *His* sake. This is what is meant by *His* acting as ears and eyes of a bondsman. I say that this interpretation does not convey the correct sense of the Hadith. The narration is in the first person which denotes that a bondsman who has attained **ALLAH**'s nearness retains only his form and appearance, all his actions are directly controlled by *Him*. This is the station termed as Fana fi-**ALLAH** by the sufis, which means that such a person is no longer possessed by his desires, his reins are with **ALLAH**.

The analogy is found in the Qur-an in the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام. When he got near the fire, a voice was heard, “Praised be the *Being* within,” though he could see only the fire. When *His* refulgence manifested through the fire, a voice was heard, “*I* am **ALLAH**.” The point to ponder over is: How did Musa عليه السلام hear **ALLAH**’s Speech from the fire? The speaker apparently is the burning bush but the speech has been attributed to **ALLAH**, because *His* Refulgence appeared in the burning bush which became an intermediary of *His* gnosis. The object of refulgence acted for the Refulgent. The fact is that the Divine light reflected in the fire because at the time Musa عليه السلام needed the fire. If you have understood the reality of Divine Refulgence, go past mere analogies and get closer to *Him.* When it is true of a bush that a voice, “*I* am **ALLAH**.” can be heard from inside it, there is no reason to doubt that *He* can act through the instrumentality of *His* confidants. When man is created on the countenance of the Beneficent, why should he be considered inferior to that bush of Prophet Musa عليه السلام. Such issues must be pondered over very carefully, for mere conventional knowledge cannot lead us anywhere. There can be no access to these realities, without having recourse to sufi knowledge. Every expert should confine himself to his own domain, and this is the domain of the sufis alone.

This discussion unveils yet another mystery, i.e., the Divine Speech is eternal just like *His* Refulgence, but it appeared in a created object, i.e., the burning bush, and was heard also. This is exactly the case of the Qur-an, it is eternal, non-creation but manifests itself through the speech of the creation. Likewise, the Divine words manifest themselves in the form of kashf and ilham, through an enlightened heart.

Imam Zahbi’s remarks referred to above have been elaborated in the explanation of Mizan-e E‘itedal vol: I. p: 301.

Had I not been over-awed by the authenticity of al-Bukhari. I would have listed this Hadith in the fabrications of Khalid bin Mukhallad.

The great ‘Allama Ibn-e Hajr has refuted this remark in a splendid manner, in his monumental work Fatah al-Bari. Shaikh Anwar Shah Kashmiri has remarked that the problem of a particular field should better be entrusted to an expert of that field. It does not behove an unacquainted person to comment on it just to satisfy his vanity.

Difference in Nearness Through Obligatory and Supplemental Worship

Discussing this point, the sufis assert that in case of nearness through obligatory worship, a bondsman becomes *His* limbs but vice versa in the case of supplemental worship (becoming limbs is an allegory to indicate the state of nearness because **ALLAH** is beyond any corporeal description).

Faidh al-Bari vol: IV, p: 427

> When a bondsman reaches such a stage *of His* nearness, the declaration, "Whosoever bears enmity with *My* friends. *I* proclaim war against him", no longer looks strange.

The expression '*Adali Waliyan* in the Hadith denotes real enmity with **ALLAH** and not *His* friend, otherwise the expression '*Ada Waliyanli* would have been used. To expound the meaning of this Hadith, 'Allama Sayuti edited a whole treatise called al-Qaul al-Jali fi Hadith al-Wali which is available in my personal library. In his al-Hawi lil Fatawa, the 'Allama has listed this Hadith, with slight variation in the wording from five different narrators (of great standing): Anas bin Malik, Hadhrat 'Aishah, Memuna, Ibn-e 'Abbas and Abi Imama.

These various wordings of the Hadith clearly bring out the fact that the Prophet formally advised his Ummah to love the aulia and dare not oppose them. Writes 'Allama Ibn-e Jozi:

> We have been persuaded to embed in our hearts the love for a wali-**ALLAH.** In one Hadith, the Prophet supplicates in these words "O *Rabb*! I beseech *You* of *Your* Love and the love of the one who holds *You* dear."

'Allama Shokani dilates on this Hadith in the following words:

> And the Hadith lists the means adopted by *His* bondsmen to attain *His* Love. The Prophet supplicated for the love of those who love *Him*. And it is an established fact that only sincere bondsmen bear love with Him. So their love is an act of *His* obedience and a form of *His* nearness.

Tuhfa tuz-Zakirin p: 331

Two points have been repeatedly emphasised in these narrations. The first is a prohibition, i.e., enmity of the aulia. Here, the warning is so stern that it has been proclaimed as enmity with *Him*. The second is a command, i.e., to cultivate love for the aulia, which has been declared as a means to *His* obedience and nearness. The reason is quite obvious: the aulia are to be loved because they show the way to *His* Love. They have a well tried prescription in the form of zikr. When it is performed in their company, in the prescribed manner, it surely results in **ALLAH**'s Love. Al-Bukhari and al-Muslim recount the benefits and the end results of this collective zikr in the following words:

> When a group of men assemble for **ALLAH**'s zikr, the Angels cover them by their wings, they are engulfed by *His* Grace. A state of peace descends on them and they are in turn, remembered by *Him* in the presence of Angels. It is such a group, that anyone joining it does not die as a wretched.

This Hadith clearly brings out the effects of zikr and the company of the aulia, so much so, that the latter alone are a guarantee against a miserable end. Hadhrat Anwar Shah Kashmiri explains this Hadith further in his Faidh al-Bari:

> The Angels spread their wings over them, they are encircled like the sun in an eclipse. The light of zikr spreads around them like the waves caused by a stone flung in water. These waves are, of course, proportionate to the force with which the stone is hurled. Likewise everything falling within the zikr wave is affected and joins in zikr. Imam Sh'arani is said to have once noticed during zikr that everything had joined in. By morning, the entire earth had been affected and everything was in harmony with him in zikr. The Prophet's saying that anyone sitting with those engaged in zikr does not remain wretched points to this meaning. In fact, zikr is life- and animates everything in its wake. This influence extends according to the strength and sincerity of the endeavour of the one engaged in it till the entire environment springs to life and joins in. If you can discern this reality it will be easier to discuss the secret of birds and mountains joining the Prophet Daud in hymning *His* praise. The entire atmosphere was influenced by zikr. According to the Holy Qur-an, everything joined his Halqah-e Zikr and since he was a Prophet, the strength and influence of his zikr was proportionate to his status. This is not so in the case of others.

Zikr by the trees, the stones, the mountains and the birds is clearly proved by Hadith. Ibn-e Majah and Tirmizi under chapters on Hajj, and al-Bukhari lists this Hadith under Azan:

> The Prophet said that when a Muslim recites Talbih (a set of phrases repeated by the pilgrim affirming his presence before **ALLAH**), all stones, trees and pebbles join him till it spreads to all corners of the globe. About the Azan, al-Bukhari quotes the Holy Prophet:
>
> "Anyone who hears the Azan from among men, the jinn and other creation will bear witness to it on the Day of Reckoning."

The explanations of the aforementioned Hadith indicate that zikr initiated by an accomplished Shaikh suffuses the entire environment. It is, therefore, immaterial how far away the devotees are sitting from him.

This discussion highlights another important issue. Those who deny hearing by the dead, should note that when stones, trees, dust and all other things hear Talbih and the Azan, there is no reason to exclude the dead, even if reduced to bits and pieces, or reduced to dust. Disagreement, however, exists whether the dead hymn *His* praise, consonant with their new state or according to their previous existence. Nevertheless, the cognition and understanding by the dead cannot be denied even after they turn into dust, as it is possible and duly proved in case of stones, trees and dust, no matter how incredible it may seem.

In the light of the above discourse, we can draw the following conclusions:

- The love for the aulia is a well tried and assured means to attain *His* Love.

- Persuasion to zikr, specifying its method is the most successful and dependable prescription with the aulia.

- Frequent zikr and the company of the aulia leads to inculcation of **ALLAH**'s Love and rescues one from a wretched end.

- Enmity with the aulia is indeed enmity with **ALLAH**. Maulana Thanvi once said, "It is not infidelity to bear enmity with the aulia but those who insult or disgrace them die as infidels."

- The obligations of Shari'ah are just like capital investment, while spiritual advancement rests on supplemental worship: The latter, however, is totally unreliable and of no consequence without the discharge of the former.

- Fana fi-**ALLAH** and Baqa bi-**ALLAH** is a reality.

- Those who deny kashf and ilham in fact, place the Prophet'sﷺ Ummah even lower than the bush of Musa عليه السلام.

- Halqah-e Zikr has been authenticated.

- Those sufis engaged in zikr are the focal points of *His* Refulgence.

CHAPTER-IV

QALB (THE HEART)

Tasawwuf aims at inner purification which, in turn, depends on the reformation of the Qalb. This chapter deals in detail with this important aspect.

The Prophet ﷺ said, “There is a lump of flesh in the human body on which the health of the human body depends. Hearken, that lump is the Qalb.”

On the face of it, this Hadith speaks of the physical heart, a lump of flesh, but in fact it implies the subtlety within, deeply imbedded and to facilitate easy understanding, the physical heart has been mentioned. The point to note here is that the soundness of the Qalb is inconceivable without Fana and Baqa - for details refer to Chapter VIII. At this stage the seeker attains communion with **ALLAH**, prior to this, he might waver in his faith. The famous dictum of the sufis:

> “Whoever attains Fana is not rejected and the one who attains Divine communion stands consummated and eternalised” is supported by the Hadith narrated in al-Bukhari containing a dialogue between Abu Sufyan and the Caesar of Rome:
>
> “I asked you if people, after embracing Islam, ever renounce it for being bad and you replied in the negative. And such is the Bashashat (delight) of the Faith that the Qalb once suffused with it, sustains.”

After attaining the stage of Fana fi-**ALLAH** and Baqa bi-**ALLAH**, the Faith penetrates the heart- a state described in the Qur-an in these words:

> *But **ALLAH** has endeared the Faith to you and has beautified it in your hearts.*
> (49:7)

This means that the Qalb (the subtlety) is the one entrusted with responsibility, the addressed, the learned, the philosopher, the preceptor, the hearer, the seer and the reckoner. With regard to the body, its relationship is that of prudence and command, i.e., it acts as the planner as well as the executive. The ears and eyes gain information for it and the tongue acts as the spokesman. The real man, the sovereign of the human body is **the Qalb.**

Qalb - the Focal Point of Responsibility

The entrusting of responsibility is subject to the possession of sense and perception as described in the Qur-an:

> *Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart of each of these will be questioned.*
> (17:36)

(Here, the hearing and the sight are linked with the heart because these act as aids to its perception.)

> *And they say, 'Had we been accustomed to listen or had sense, we would not have been among the dwellers of the Flames.'* (67:10)

(This lamentation of the dwellers of the Fire shows that the heart possesses sense and that the entrusting of responsibility demands sense.)

Wisdom lies in the Heart

> *And they have hearts wherewith to perceive.* (22:46)

The Seat of Piety is the Heart

> *Those are they whose hearts **ALLAH** has proven into piety.* (49:3)

The Addressee and the Recipient of Revelation is the Heart

> *For He it is Who has revealed (this scripture) to your heart.* (2:97)

This proves that in reality the addressee is the heart, the perceiving and commanding master. All other body organs are subservient to it.

> *And lo! it is a revelation of the Rabb of the worlds, which the True Spirit has brought down upon your heart that you may be (one) of the warners.* (26:192-194)

> *Lo! therein truly is a reminder for him who has a heart.* (50:37)

Reckoning Dependent on the Deeds of the Heart

> *But He will take to task for that which your hearts have done.* (2:225)

Dissonance of Knowledge and Perception has a Direct Reference to the Heart

> ***ALLAH** has sealed their hearts...* (2:7)

> *And they say our hearts are hardened...* (2:88)

> *Having hearts wherewith they understand not...* (7:179)

It also proves that the seat of ignorance and heedlessness is the heart.

> *No, there is rust on their hearts...* (83:14)

Note: These Qur-anic verses prove that the heart is the trustee of revelation and Prophethood, the secrets of Divinity and Shari'ah and is a custodian of the secrets of the Unseen. It is a treasure which cannot be robbed by forces of intellect. It is the heart which is the treasure house of **ALLAH**'s effulgence, wilayah, kashf and ilham.

The heart becomes blind and deaf because of sins, but these maladies are cured through the treatment of a spiritual guide, who can turn an ailing heart into a whole heart. And it is this whole heart which leads to salvation in the Hereafter.

> *The day when wealth and sons avail not (any man) save him who brings to **ALLAH** a whole heart.* (26:88-89)

Every human being has one heart, the focal point of Divine manifestations. That is why **ALLAH** does not approve of any alien control of it. When the heart becomes the abode of the Divine Effulgence the spiritual ailments depart abased.

> *Lo! kings, when they enter a township, ruin it and make the honour of its people shame.* (27:34)

Therefore when the heart is fully reformed, its discursive impulses depart and a wali exclaims:

> *Will not **ALLAH** suffice as a friend to (defend) His slave.* (39:36)

The Whole Heart

There are two conditions for it:

(1) Freedom from Ailments: These are described by the Qur-an as infidelity, polytheism, incredulity and sensuality. The sole method to remedy these maladies is to seek treatment of a spiritual mentor.
(2) Wholesome Food: Just as the physical health and vigour of the human body depends on wholesome food, so does the health of the heart, (though the type of food differs in each case). The wholesome food for hearts prescribed by the Qur-an is:

> *Truly in **ALLAH**'s zikr do hearts find peace.* (13:28)

The treatment of the heart and its wholesome food cannot, of course, be had from anybody other than accomplished divines.

CHAPTER-V

RUH (THE SPIRIT)

It should be understood at the very outset that the Ruh here will be defined by way of reasoning and not as a reality, because of the following Divine Command:

> *And of the knowledge (of the spirit) you have been granted but little.* (17:85)

Although it has been defined in many ways, the one accepted by all Ahl-e Sunnah wal Jama'at (Sunnis) is given below:

Definition

The Book and the Hadith, the consensus of the Companions, as well as rational conclusions prove that the Ruh is also a body, opposite in nature to the physical body. It is luminous, radiant, incorporeal, subtle, living and dynamic, and permeates all the organs of the physical body. It is a delicate circulation and diffusion, as of water in a rose, oil in an olive branch, or fire in a pile of coal.

Ruh is a Subtle Body

That the Ruh is subtle and opposite to the physical body is proved from the Qur-an:

> *So when I have made him (reference is to Prophet Adam* عليه السلام*) and have breathed into him of My Spirit...* (15:29)

This brings out that the Nafakh (breathing of the spirit) takes place after shaping the physical body and also proves that the two are separate entities. Nafakh, being necessarily of a body, proves that the Ruh is a subtle body. This has been explained further in another verse:

> *And then produced it as another creation...* (23:14)

This shows that the physical body came into existence first, of course, through the evolutionary stages of a drop (of semen), a clot, a little lump, bones and clothing of the bones with flesh. Then it was turned into another creation by breathing the spirit which permeated every part of it. This establishes further that the Ruh is a separate entity with a subtle form saturating the physical body.

Ruh is not Inseparable

In the Hadith, the state of the Ruh at the time of death has been described as: “So it tries to hide itself in the body.” This falsifies any notion that the Ruh is inseparable. However, it is a subtle body but knowledge as to its nature has not been granted to man, even on request. On the other hand, **ALLAH** revealed the creation of Angels, Jinn, and human beings, without being asked. When specifically asked about the nature of the Ruh, the answer was:

> *Say, the spirit is by the Command of my Rabb.* (17:85)

Had its creation been from any element like water, air, fire, clay or light, it would have been so indicated. This leads us to conclude that the Ruh has been created from something more subtle than light itself:

> Said Abu Qasim Sohaili (d. 581 A. H. / 1185 C. E.), the Ruh has been created by Nafakh (breath) which is the act of an Angel. The Angels are created from light as described in the Hadith narrated in al-Muslim. And the Ruh is a body belonging to the species Reeh. Derived therefrom, it is called the Ruh.

Note: This shows that the Ruh has been created from Angel’s Nafakh (breath), and Angels have been created from light; therefore the Ruh is more subtle than the Angels. Just as the human breath is more subtle than his elemental body, the breath of the Angels should be more subtle than themselves.

Ruh is Placeless

> Mark that those who are convinced of the existence of the Ruh are divided into two groups. First are the men of deep understanding, the research scholars; some of them hold that the Ruh is neither included in, nor excluded from, the universe. It is also neither incorporated in the universe nor rests separated from it. But with the human body, its connection is one of prudence and command.

Tafsir-e Kabir vol: V, p: 445

Obviously, the Ruh is incorporeal, very subtle, placeless and has no abode. An abode is for material things, not for incorporeal beings. It existed before the creation of the body and continues to exist even after it passes away. It sees, hears and speaks. The state of its existence has been described in the Hadith by the word ‘Ama’ (incomprehensible). When the Prophet ﷺ was asked “Where is our Creator?” he replied, “In ‘Ama’,” adding that no abode can be ascribed to *Him.*

Question: The scholars argue that being incorporeal is the unique attribute of the Creator. If this is conceded for the Ruh, it will amount to apostasy.

Answer: Being incorporeal, with reference to the Creator, implies Indispensable Existence and Absolute Eternity. It does not mean abstraction which was non-existent previously and which is contingent and created. The best answer to this question has been given by Imam Razi:

> Mark that a group of the ignorant think that when the Ruh exists and neither circumscribes nor is circumscribed, then its resemblance with the Creator will have to be conceded, this is sheer ignorance and a blunt blunder. This equation is in the negative attributes and does not amount to resemblance.

Tafsir-e Kabir vol: V. p: 445

Notes:

- It is proved that anything having relative or negative attributes of the Creator does not become *His* partner.
- Human rationalism is incapable of comprehending the meaning of 'placelessness'. The word 'Ama' in the Hadith, which is used for blindness supports this argument. The Qur-anic injunction "Say, the spirit is by the Command of my *Rabb*" clearly indicates that the Ruh is from the Realm of Command. Since human intellect is unable to comprehend the Realm of Command, how can it perceive what is within it? Therefore to get to the reality of the Ruh is impossible through rationalisation, reasoning and conventional knowledge. In fact its discernment is related to intuition and kashf, which if confirmed by the searching light of reason, would be a bonus.

As for intuition and kashf, only the verdict of their experts can and should constitute an authority. And their verdict is: the Ruh is a body, refulgent and subtle, precisely resembling the physical body that bears it in shape, form and structure. The majority of the Muslim theologians corroborate this fact. Writes Hadhrat Anwar Shah Kashmiri in his 'Urf-e Shuzi (a commentary of at-Tirmizi) p: 10:

> As for the Ruh, the Muslim theologians agree that it is a subtle body exactly resembling the physical body that bears it. This version of the Ruh is supported by Hadith. Narrates Bara bin 'Azib: The Angel pulls out the Ruh from the body as a skewer is pulled out from wet wool.... A number of Ahadith corroborate that the Ruh has a body.... So we follow the categorical injunction of the Book and the Hadith. Being incorporeal, according to the 'Ulama of old, means absence of opaqueness as brought out by Imam Ibn-e Taimiyah in his tafsir of Surah al-Ikhlas.

Ruh-Wa-Ma Hait-o Ha

Imam Malik, a great research scholar, says that the Ruh is a refulgent body, fully resembling the body which bears it.

> Know that the Muslims have differed in what constitutes a human being. It has been said that a human being is a perceptible figure in which elements flow like moisture in a flower, fire in amber, while the Ruh is subtle, refulgent body which in its reality and nature is different from other constituents of this perceptible figure. This (subtle body) Ruh is flowing into and fully resembles that figure. We cannot fathom its reality as implied in the Quranic verse: *Say, the spirit is by the* Com*mand of my Rabb* and this is accepted by the righteous of old. The Ruh and the physical body have an intimate connection.
>
> And this body which is called the Ruh as explained by Imam Qurtabi in his Tazkirah, has a beginning but no end, i.e., it is immortal even when separated from the physical body. In this context it has been stated that anyone who considers the Ruh as mortal is an atheist.

Ruh al-Ma‘ani vol: XXIV p: 53.

This view is held by the research scholars, the righteous of old and erudite sufi masters.

Now a glimpse of the other rejected view:

Hadhrat Anwar Shah Kashmiri has reproduced this view in his ‘Urf-e Shuzi p: 10-11. It is traceable to the philosophers and the theologians or sufis, who subscribed to this view were directly influenced by them. These narrow philosophers say that the Ruh is independent.

> The assertion that the Ruh exists by itself has been made by Zada, ‘Allama Halimi, Imam Ghazali, Imam Ragheb, Abu Zaid Dabosi Hanafi and of M‘amer from the old M‘utazilah (non-conformists) and all the modern Shi‘ites, a number of sufis also hold this view. To them the Ruh is an abstract element, it is neither included, nor excluded, from the body, its connection with the body is like that of the Creator with the universe. They hold the Ruh is immortal, contingent in time. Ibn-e Qayyam has refuted this view so thoroughly with cogent reasons that no further rebuttal is required.

Ruh al-Ma‘ani p: 24. 53 and ‘Urf-e Shuzi p: 11.

The above extract shows that the rejected view is shared by men from Shaf‘ai, Hanafi, M‘utazilah and Shi‘ites schools of thought, all brow-beaten by the philosophers. The former and the right view is held by a large group of sufis of deep enlightenment and a vast majority of the Muslim theologians, in particular, by the great righteous of old. *In fine,* the Ruh is a body, subtle, refulgent, looking exactly like the physical body, which

bears it. After departing the physical body, it does not need any identical body. Life connotes perception, motion, sight, hearing, speech and the presence of all corporeal potentialities both inward and outward. The Ruh gives life to the physical body and needs material appendages to deal with the materialist affairs. It does not owe its existence to the physical body, on the contrary, it animates it. While in Barzakh, it cannot make itself heard in the material world. That is why it cannot be heard or seen, though by itself it articulates and hears, though it lives and subsists by itself. It has been proved earlier that it has the same form as the physical body that bears it. The Ruh by itself is a subtle body like the Angels, hearts of the Prophets and the aulia. It does not need material means to see or hear or make itself heard by other subtle bodies. The question of its likeness in Barzakh therefore, does not arise. That would mean that another body provides life to it, it cannot subsist by itself, has no adjunct and is like a stone (God forbid). *In fine,* to preconceive another body for the Ruh is against the Book, the Hadith and the creed of righteous precursors. Whosoever believes in an illusion has gone astray.

May **ALLAH** guide him!

The Ruh is from the Realm of Command

Now the question arises: How is the Ruh created? Writes Imam Razi:

> The origin of the Ruh is from the *Rabb* of the Tremendous Throne (*the Command of my Rabb*), while the human body originates from clay. The Creator ordained love between the two to enable them to accept commands and the tribulations of the worldly life. So the Ruh is a foreigner and the body a native. Therefore, be mindful of your responsibilities towards this stranger.

Tafsir-e Kabir

What is Realm of Command

Imam Ghazali, one of the greatest masters of sufi thought, discussing the Realm of Command and the created world concludes that between these two, the Tremendous Throne is the barrier.

> The Realm of Command is among the things that exist but is beyond the reach of experience and imagination. Being boundless and devoid of all matter, it cannot be measured in terms of time and space.

Risala-e Ruh

What else is Identified with the Realm of Command

The author of the famous Tafsir-e Mazhari (vol: XIV. p: 407) writes in the explanation of the verse "*His truly is all Creation and Command*."

> The learned sufis define the Realm of Creation and the Realm of Command thus: The former comprises the Tremendous Throne, things thereunder and whatever is in and in between the heavens and the earth. It comprises the four elements: fire, water, air and clay and things created therefrom, i.e., souls in living beings, and in plants and minerals. These souls are subtle bodies which are flowing in physical bodies, all belonging to the created world. The Realm of Command comprises incorporeal beings, i.e., Lataif, the Qalb, Ruh, Sirri, Khaffi and the Akhfa all above the Tremendous Throne. These souls flow in human beings, Angels and devils just as the rays of the sun flow onto a mirror. These Lataif are attributed to the Realm of Command because they have not been created from any matter instead through *His* direct Command. Writes Baghavi, quoting Sufyan bin 'Ayaina, that the created world and the Realm of Command are two separate entities, whosoever considers them as one is an infidel.

Note: This discussion shows that the Ruh and other Lataif named above are from the Realm of Command, not created from any matter. The Realm of Command is also known as the Realm of Wonder and the Realm of Infinity.

The Form of Ruh

The human body is a material entity; its shape, physique and the organs can be seen by our physical eyes. But the question arises as to how the human Ruh looks like, or is it just an abstract element? This has been discussed in al-Bukhari in the following words:

> In conformity to the physical appearance of a human body, the Ruh too has a subtle appearance. It also has eyes, ears and limbs. Infact a similitude for all organs of the Ruh can be found in the physical body. And the reality of the Ruh has been left vague by Divine Will. No details have been given.

Tuhfa tul-Qari Sharah al-Bukhari, v: 44 p: 2

This indicates that the outward appearance of the Ruh coincides exactly with the appearance of its host body.

Barzakh is also termed as the minor Doomsday where the Ruh remains alive, and the Hereafter is the major Doomsday, about which the Qur-an says:

> *Verily, the Home of the Hereafter, that is the life indeed.* (21:64)

Obviously, in comparison to this terrestrial life, the Hereafter is the most complete and comprehensive life. Death and extinction is the lot of this globe and all that lies within, but the life in the Hereafter is eternal. Therefore, all that lies in the eternal abode, whether in part or as a whole, will not experience death. When there is requital for the Ruh, then it is evident that it is alive, because there is not requital for the extinct. That is why the Ruh sees, hears and speaks, in fact all its faculties attain the level of excellence in the Hereafter. When the Ruh enters a body, the characteristics of the body, viz. childhood, youth and old age become evident. Similarly, the limitation of human intellect and understanding during childhood, and its gradual improvement with age also become visible. All these are characteristics of the physical body, whereas the Ruh is blessed with intellect, maturity and wisdom right from the moment of its creation. Had this not been true, then it could not have said "Yes" to the Divine question. "Am *I* not your *Rabb*?" To hear, understand and reply a question is a proof of Ruh's wisdom and maturity.

When a Ruh is associated to a body, its connection with that body is permanent in nature. It is then blessed with the organs of the body. The body is entrusted with certain powers and faculties; some of which are sensory while others abstract. While in the body, the Ruh derives knowledge through the faculties of the body. The sensory perceptions of a body are elementary at birth, and since the Ruh is made subservient to it in worldly life, thus with the development of the body, corresponding increase in these physical capabilities can be observed. Had the Ruh not been made subservient to the body here, then every person would have become accountable right from birth, because of the Ruh having been created wise and mature. But because of its association with the body, a certain age has been transfixed for accountability. This is known as the age of puberty. When a person passes away from this world, the Ruh is separated from the body, and becomes independent. Here many people erred, and tried to prove the existence of Ruh possible only is a similar body in Barzakh. This amounts to the denial of Ruh's independent existence. This belief is untenable. The Ahl-e Sunnah unanimously believe that the Ruh exists on its own in Barzakh, and the body is subservient to it. The body created out of clay is blessed with life only because of Ruh.

Shah 'Abdul 'Aziz writes:

> Ruh gives movement to the body, while it gets its own life and movement from Divine lights. My dear fellow, it is not possible to comprehend this completely. Continuous zikr and contemplation, and spiritual voyage to the celestial worlds are impossible without the sincerity of the seeker and the tawajjuh of an accomplished Shaikh.

Fatawa-e Aziziah v: 2. p: 112

CHAPTER-VI

NAFS (THE SOUL)

What is the Soul?

The Arabic word Nafs is either derived from 'Nafasat' (refinement or exquisiteness), because of its civility and elegance, or from 'Tanaffas' (breathing) because of its inevitable process of ingress and egress. If, on account of the latter attribute, the soul is taken to mean the spirit, it will be a fair assumption because during sleep it departs, and it returns upon awakening.

The Soul and the Spirit

The soul and the spirit are two names of the same thing. This is borne out by the Hadith [2] Lail at-T'aris:

> Said Bilal to the Prophet, "My nafs was held by the same Power *Who* held yours." The Prophet replied. "Our Ruh were gathered away by the Creator."

Note: The same thing called Nafs by Bilal has been referred to as the Ruh by the Prophet. Conformity in the two statements is possible only by accepting two names for the same entity.

In the Qur-an, the term Nafs (soul) has also been used to mean the Ruh.

Deliver up your souls... (6:93)

***ALLAH** receives souls at the time of their death.* (39:42)

Note: In both these verses, the word Nafs has been used to mean the Ruh. A majority of the 'Ulama agree on this. (Kitab ar-Ruh by Ibn-e Qayyam p: 264).

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[2] **T**he Night of Rest, so named because the Prophet and his Companions while on their journey on two separate occasions rested late at night. Hadhrat Bilal from Habshah (Abayssinia), a renowned Companion, was deputed to rouse them for the morning prayers, but he could not, being himself overtaken by sleep. This resulted on everyone missing their prayer at its proper time. - Translator

The Distinction

'**A**llama Abu Qasim Sohaili, in his Raudh al-Anf has dwelt on this subject at length. He concludes that the Ruh and Nafs are one and the same thing. The distinction lies in the attributes. At the first instance, that is, at the moment of 'breathing' by the Angel into the child in the womb, it is the Ruh. After birth, when the child acquires various traits of character, commendable or infamous, it cultivates love for the physical body and engages in its well-being, it is termed as Nafs. Before acquiring these traits it is not correct to use the term Nafs. Thereafter as heedlessness and carnal desires set in, the expression Nafs becomes appropriate because these two traits necessarily emanate from the Nafs.

What is Peace?

The preceding two traits of the Nafs, i.e., being inconsiderate and licentious, can be harnessed through endeavour and toil, i.e., by reducing diet, reticence, seclusion and piety. It is this harnessing, which in sufi terminology is called peace, and has three distinct stages:

(1) The first stage is that of total absence of peace and tranquillity; the soul at this stage is termed Nafs-e Ammarah- (The Evil Soul)
(2) The second stage is one of incompleteness: the soul here is called Nafs-e Lawwamah- (The Accusing Soul).
(3) The third stage is one of absolute tranquillity; this soul is termed as Nafs-e Mutmainnah- (The Peaceful Soul).

Different Names of one Entity

If a single entity is described in different words having the same antecedent, no contradiction takes place. For example, the creation of Prophet Adam عليه السلام has been described in the Qur-an in different words:

Created him of dust. (3: 59)

Of plastic clay. (15:26)

Created out of potter's clay of black mud altered. (15:33)

Of clay like the potter's. (55:14)

Thus the Nafs and the Ruh are two names for the same entity. The distinction is by way of attributes.

The difference is by way of attributes and not in terms of essence. (Kitab ar-Ruh by Ibn-e Qayyam p: 265).

CHAPTER-VII

LATAIF AND THE ACCOMPLISHED SHAIKH

The learned sufis are the authoritative interpreters of the fundamental statutes, by dint of their intuition, of Tariqah, gnosis and Islamic mysticism. They deduce the esoteric Zanni ordinances in the same manner as the learned jurists do with regard to similar exoteric ordinances. The former, however, have an edge over the latter and that is by way of kashf and ilham. The endeavour of the jurists is through personal opinion in the light of relevant facts while the sufis make use of their kashf and ilham, a Divine intuition. Obviously a Divine intuition is superior to personal opinion. However, the yardstick for the validity of both methods is that their conclusions must not be at variance with the Book and the Sunnah, though the superiority of the sufi method is well established:

Ilham is a light with which **ALLAH** honours any of *His* bondsmen *He* wills.

Fatah al-Bari M'a Bukhari vol: XII, p: 315

Personally, I prefer the Ijtehad of the learned jurists over kashf and ilham, because this has been the practice of the sufis themselves who have invariably followed the former. The jurist's endeavour, therefore, takes priority for practical purposes.

The Five Lataif

The learned sufis maintain the human body has ten components. The four elements (air, water, fire, clay) and the soul are corporeal while the five Lataif, (Qalb, Ruh, Sirri, Khaffi and Akhfa)[3] described in Chapter V are incorporeal. Some argue in favour of an additional one, i.e., Sultan al-Azkar taking the total to 11. These theories do not hold because the Lataif are incorporeal and subtle things. The inclusion of the soul is a mere probability. As for Sultan al-Azkar, it is not a Latifah at all but a manner of zikr in which it is assumed that zikr is emanating from every cell of the body. In fact, the Lataif are only five, others being referred as such only as probabilities.

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[3] **T**he function of Qalb is zikr, of Ruh- constant attention, of Sirri- kashf, of Khaffi- omnipresence, observation and manifestation of Divinity, and of Akhfa- observation of Divinity and total communion.

Differences of the Lataif

Some sufis believe in the diversity of the Lataif while others, the research scholars, are convinced of unification and argue in favour of only one, the Qalb, which they believe is endowed with a number of attributes. They contend that just as a person having a number of different attributes (e.g., a scholar, a Qari, a scribe, an orator, etc.) continues to remain one entity, similarly the Qalb is also the focal point of all other Lataif. The variation in the signs and colour of lights and functions of the Lataif is ascribed to the multiplicity of attributes and does not alter the factual position of the Qalb. Should this point of view be accepted, a question will arise as to why the learned sufis direct disciples to focus their attention at different points in the chest during zikr, although their method, in addition to being continuous has the backing of kashf. Therefore, diversity will have to be conceded. Now in the method called Zikr-e Qalbi all attention is concentrated on the Qalb because it is the focal point of Divine lights and glories. Just as the Qalb has connection with the physical heart, other Lataif are connected, though analogously, to their respective points of location. That there are specific points in the human body denoting location of various Lataif is supported by Hadith. Abi Mahzurah:

> Then the Prophet ﷺ placed his hand on the forehead of Abi Mahzurah, moved it down on his face, onto his chest and according to another version to his liver and finally down to his navel and invoked Divine blessings for him.

Note: The Prophet ﷺ might have done this perchance or with a specific purpose, it proves that these points have definite sanctity; and that is our point.

Those who support the theory of unification argue that only Zikr-e Qalbi and not of other Lataif have been mentioned in the Hadith. However, Imam Ghazali in his Ahya ul-'Ulum, vol: III. p: 4. has recounted some of the Lataif and proved their unification adding that the Ruh, the Qalb, the intellect and the soul are one and the same thing, the diversity among them is relative.

Reason for Differences

Because of the utmost proximity of Lataif, Zikr-e Qalbi leads to an inducement of effects, lights, colours and functions into other Lataif as do the rays of the sun into the reflecting mirrors. The mirror facing the sun will be reflecting the sun's rays into all others placed opposite to it.

The theory of diversity is also supported by genuine kashf because as soon as the Lataif of a seeker are illuminated, he moves on to the stages of the Path, starting from the first empyrean, far beyond the seventh heaven. He can then see his Ruh in flight but not the other Lataif. Should a seeker not observe this, how could he know that he was actually traversing the stages of the Path? A question may be asked as to how can the Ruh be seen in its flight and at such a great distance? The answer does not lie in vain argumentation, but in 'getting down to brass tacks' in the company of, and under the guidance of an accomplished Shaikh.

Not to embellish, but by way of gratitude and remembrance of *His Grace*, I wish to place it on record that anyone with sincerity of purpose, and with no intention for ulterior motives, should come to me for only six months.[4] He will be put to certain restrictions, namely; a pure and wholesome diet at a reduced scale, reticence, less sleep, seclusion, preoccupation with zikr and meditation, and will be given Tawajjuh twice a day. **ALLAH** willing, he shall see for himself what the Ruh looks like during its flight. This period of six months is prescribed on the lines of the Prophet ﷺ while the zikr will be conducted in accordance with **ALLAH**'s Commandment:

> *...Remember your Rabb much, and praise Him in the early hours of the night and the morning.* (3:41)

And restriction on speech and need for seclusion are essential for the proper grooming of a seeker as enunciated in the verse:

> *You shall not speak to mankind for three days except by signs.* (3:41)

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[4] The learned author had prescribed a period of six months to enable the spirit to fly and to witness its flight. Beside the important condition of earnest seeking, the end result has been clearly entrusted to the Will of **ALLAH**, as the wording '**ALLAH** willing' in the text indicates. There is nothing unusual about it. Every experienced teacher and expert can put forward such an appraisal, on the basis of his experience and expertise. It must be remembered that the principle of acquiring conventional knowledge and skills by different people in varying length of time, according to their determination and capacity, equally applies to the seekers of the sufi path. For sure, we have seen disciples of the author attaining, by **ALLAH**'s Grace, the power of levitation and observation within a week or so; (that is the Bounty of **ALLAH**, which *He* gives to whom *He* will), and there is nothing new or extraordinary about it.

(a) Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanvi writes in al-Ibqa (a journal published by Maktab-e Thanvi Karachi, comprising sermons of the Maulana delivered in his life time), that Maulana Ghulam Rasul Kanpuri was popularly known as "Rasul Numa", (literally, one who shows the Prophet ﷺ), because it was his karamah that he could make every aspirant see the Prophet ﷺ in full consciousness.

(b) Imam Yafai writes in his Keyafat al-M'ateqia with reference to Munaqib-e Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani. A disciple of this great saint narrates that one night the saint set out quietly, followed by him. The doors of the city opened and closed automatically as they passed by, till they reached the place where a dead body was lying. A man was brought whom the Shaikh converted to Islam and said, "This man will take the place of the dead." They returned. The following day he inquired about the mysterious affair and the Shaikh explained: "We had gone to Nehao where the seventh Abdal had passed away. The man converted to Islam and appointed in his place was a Christian from Constantinople."

This incident has been listed by 'Allama Sayuti in al-Hawi lil Fatawa and al-Juz ad-Dal, and by Maulana Thanvi in his al-lbqa. The point to note is that a man (by the Grace of **ALLAH** and the beneficence of an accomplished Shaikh) embraces Islam and makes progress in the Path to such an extent that he becomes an Abdal overnight.

(c) Another incident is narrated in Fawaid al-Fawad p: 71-72;

Then the conversation turned towards Shaikh Baha ud-Din Zakariah, who was said to have attained as much in only 17 days as others could not do in years. This caused some heartburn among the old timers who complained that an outsider from India had been so richly rewarded in such a short time, while they had been in the service of the Shaikh for years together. When the word reached the Shaikh, he told them. "You are like wet logs which take time in catching fire, while Zakariah was like a dry twig, which ignited with a single blowing." Note that the earnest seeker who had the necessary capacity, consummated in seventeen days by the beneficence of an accomplished Shaikh.

My dear reader! Sincerity of purpose is totally lacking. Not to speak of the Muslim masses, even the ‘Ulama fail to appreciate the gravity of the situation and contend that it is enough to abide by the dictates of the Shari‘ah. I reiterate that without inner purification, the Shari‘ah cannot be purposefully followed. To recite *Ia-I1aha-ill-**ALLAH*** (there is no one worthy of worship and obedience but **ALLAH)** does indeed amount to the negation of all outward gods, but, the deities set within one’s soul can never be gotten rid of without its purification.

The learned externalists can describe the permitted and the prohibited, but cannot differentiate one from the other as it depends upon inner enlightenment, which is extremely rare. **ALLAH** has, in *His* infinite mercy, blessed mankind with three distinct faculties for perception: imagination, intellect and inner illumination. The first is of no consequence in comparison to the second, which in turn, pales into insignificance when matched against the third. The learned externalists lack the third faculty, which has been inherited from the Prophet ﷺ by true erudites and learned sufis.

My dear friend! This invaluable wealth cannot be attained by setting up sufi institutions, publishing journals, or by mere study of dry-as-dust books on the subject. It is a matter of ilqa and In‘ekas, which only an accomplished Shaikh can dispensate to sincere seekers in his company.

.. (cont‘d)

(d) Maulana Gangohi in Imdad as-Suluk p: 31:

Under all the prescribed conditions, if a true seeker adheres to the Prophet’s ﷺ Sunnah for a continuous period of 40 days, he will, **ALLAH** willing, be blessed with intrinsic manifestations. To begin with, he shall see spiritual lights and stars, then angels, followed by Divine Attributes and through them some of the subtle truths, all this being the outcome of zikr.

(e) Maulana Ahmad ‘Ali Lahori (Majlis-e Zikr Part X)

“O young man! Do concede to the Prophet ﷺ’s saying that a grave is either a garden of Paradise or a ditch of Hell, or come to me with expenses for fourteen years. O young man! You lived on your father for that long to earn a BA degree, try it here also and mark that I am not prepared to feed you on alms, I shall first see if the intrinsic light in you has not gone off as per Qur-anic pronouncement: *As for the disbelievers, whether you warn them or warn them not. It is all one for them; they will believe not*. (2:6). As a result, if you are not mutated, I shall take you to an accomplished Shaikh and request him that this young man is inwardly blind and may be brought round. After you are spiritually enlightened and declared competent by the said Shaikh, go over to Miani Sahib (the largest graveyard of Lahore) and look into a couple of graves. You shall know for yourself the truth of the Prophet’s ﷺ statement.”

(f) All this clearly indicated that the sufis had been prescribing different periods for acquisition of intrinsic manifestations and due to variance in the degree of earnestness, capacity and perfection of the Shaikh, the period varied from a moment to a day, 17 days, 40 days and 14 years.

Who is an Accomplished Shaikh

Such a Shaikh must possess the following characteristics:

1. Must be a Divine academic, because the discipleship of an ignorant person is prohibited ab initio;[5]
2. Must possess sound beliefs, because wayward beliefs and Tasawwuf are diametrically opposed to each other;
3. Must be an adherent to the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah which is the gateway and the fountainhead of all excellence;
4. Must shun heresy and polytheism. The former is an error manifest while the latter is a tremendous wrong;
5. Must not be Mammon-worshipper because two loves cannot be combined:

> *And obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance who follows his own lust.* (18:28)

6. Must be an accomplished sufi or else he will not be a perfect guide to the Path;
7. Must be acquainted with the method of inner growth of his disciples and should have himself received instruction from an expert and
8. Must be capable of initiating spiritual bonds with the Prophet ﷺ who is the sole link between **ALLAH** and *His* bondsmen.[6]

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[5] ***T**he scholars among His bondsmen fear Him alone.* (35:28). Wrote Shaikh Shahab ud-Din in the explanation of this verse: Anyone not fearing **ALLAH** is not learned.

[6] The characteristics listed under (6), (7) and (8) above clearly indicate that the term 'an accomplished Shaikh' here means a guide, who is capable of leading others onto the mystic Path and over its various stages. To do so, the stage termed as Fana fir-Rasul has the basic standing.

My method is that I do not only take bai'at on my hands but also impart knowledge of the Path and after a seeker covers its initial stages, take him directly (spiritually) to the audience of the Prophet ﷺ who undoubtedly is the spiritual leader of the entire universe. This is not the idle talk of a pseudo-saint who will tell his disciple to imagine as if he were in the audience of the Prophet ﷺ. What matters is that the seeker should himself see his Ruh negotiating the initial stages of the Path, into the audience of the Prophet ﷺ and taking bai'at on his sacred hands. Anyone not having such an access to the Prophet ﷺ and still taking bai'at from the believers is a cheat, and is bound to meet Divine Retribution. This distinction between an accomplished Shaikh and a shallow master must be fully understood.

A Shaikh who cannot do this is imperfect in the mystic way of life. The author of al-Abraiz p: 34, writes that so long as a spiritual communion with the Prophet ﷺ is not attained, a communion with **ALLAH** is out of the question. Shaikh Rafi ud-Din in his treatise on bai'at writes on this point:

The bai'at considered reliable and acceptable by the sufis, is of four types:

(1) Bai'at-e Wasilat - (as a means of approach).
(2) Bai'at-e Shari'at.
(3) Bai'at-e Tariqat.
(4) Bai'at-e Haqiqat.

Any other kind of bai'at solemnised for the attainment of worldly prosperity or for any secular benefits is of no consequence whatsoever.

(1) Bai'at-e Shari'at

This should be solemnised at the hands of a guide who beside being erudite and pious should:

(a) neither ignore nor show partiality in commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong,

(b) judge and adopt the best and easiest possible course suiting the seeker's genius. The outcome of this bai'at will be salvation in the Hereafter.

(2) Bai'at-e Tariqat

The reality of this bai'at is that when a resolute bondsman of **ALLAH** hears about the excellence and eminence of the aulia and learns about their karamah. e.g., people achieving their wishes, and the aulia having control over feelings and influencing a change of heart towards **ALLAH**, knowing the states of the dead or events of the future through kashf, meeting pious spirits etc, a yearning to attain these miraculous attributes naturally overtakes him. Since no skill can be acquired without practical training under the guidance of an expert, it will be impossible for anyone to attain proficiency at his own through limited human intellect. Therefore only that person who already possesses the foregoing attributes and is also a proficient teacher should be taken as a guide and a spiritual mentor and followed in letter and spirit to help attain the desired goal. The outcome of such a bai'at is purification of the soul and illumination of the spirit with the Divine light enabling one to become a fountainhead of beneficence for others. This dispensation of beneficence makes one a Divine beloved because the entire creation is **ALLAH**'s family and **ALLAH** loves him most who is of greatest service to this family. Such a person is honoured with wilayah and righteousness.

Some simple folk ask whether the death of a guide would necessitate a fresh bai'at. They should know that bai'at by itself is not the end but a means to the end i.e., Divine Pleasure. Taking the hand of an accomplished Shaikh and receiving instruction from him with devotion, ultimately leads to the attainment of this end. If you do not take another guide on the death of the first one, it is to the detriment of your own vital interests. Your goal in that case is not Divine Pleasure but the worship of saints. It is a historical fact that the Companions, after passing away of the Prophet ﷺ took bai'at with the four noble Caliphs, one after the other.

.... (cont'd)

(3) Bai'at-e Haqiqat

Embodies: (1) total self denial. (2) forsaking secular connection. (3) mortifying carnal desires and (4) becoming inwardly unconcerned with relatives and worldly rank and position. The outcome of this bai'at is an existence eternalised by *His* lights, and the mortification of the dictates of the baser self. It is therefore obvious that the qualification of a Shaikh inducting persons to Bai'at-e Tariqat and Haqiqat are different from those relating to Bai'at-e Shari'at, and without possessing these qualifications he is not entitled to take Bai'at-e Tariqat and Haqiqat.

Says Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani (al-Fatah ar-Rabbani. Majlis 50).

"O wayfarer of the Hereafter! Be with a guide each moment till you reach the destination. Serve him well throughout the journey. Be very respectful and do not wander away from his path, for he shall familiarise you with it and take you to the nearness of **ALLAH**. When convinced of your virtue and sincerity, he will make you his deputy in the caravan till you are brought and entrusted to the care of the Prophet ﷺ. Pleased, the Prophet ﷺ shall favour you with his deputyship in the realm of spiritual truths and introspective states. So you will be an ambassador between the Creator and *His* creation moving to and fro and a servant of the Prophet ﷺ, remaining constantly in his attendance. Remember that all this cannot be attained through 'make believe' and self-indulgence. It is something sacred, embedded in the hearts and substantiated by practice."

He goes on (Majlis 44),

"Guides are of two types, namely guides of Shari'ah and guides of mysticism. The former shall lead you to creation and the latter to the Creator."

Says Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi:

For a Shaikh, an understanding of the stations and the stages of the Path, the colours of the Divine lights peculiar to each one and the grandeur, advantages of ablution, the stages of Fana-o Baqa beyond the phases of inspection and observation of Divinity as well as the gnosis of His Greatness, Magnificence, Unity and Individuality is a must. This shall enable him to bring up the devotees and guide the seekers correctly and to be worthy of being called a Pir (spiritual guide).

Imdad as-Suluk p: 27.

As for the mystic way of life, the relationship between the seeker and the Shaikh is a highly delicate affair. In the case of an ordinary teacher, one may continue to benefit from his instructions in spite of his aversion and antagonism. But in the matter of pursuance of the Path, any indifferent attitude towards an accomplished Shaikh, (if you are fortunate enough to find one) is not only detrimental to beneficence but also totally forbidden. His opposition, in fact, amounts to negation of the very purpose of inner purification and Divine Pleasure.

The Need for a Guide

Some people hold that there is no need to seek a guide. They argue that books on Tasawwuf list all methods of zikr and invocations and by following them one can achieve salvation. They forget that when indisposed they do not rely on medical books or personal knowledge, but consult a qualified physician or specialist if possible. Similarly for spiritual health and progress one must turn to a spiritual specialist without whose guidance acquisition of spiritual health, inner purification and **ALLAH**'s Pleasure are inconceivable.

….. (cont'd)

Says Hadhrat Sultan Bahu,

Remember that a Fana fi-**ALLAH** saint is a perpetual observer of Divinity. It is not at all difficult for him to enrapture a seeker with the unity of God and to take him to the spiritual audience of the Prophet ﷺ. This cannot, however, be attained by remembrance, abstinence and piety alone; for it is an accomplished Shaikh who takes a seeker to his destination, holding him by the hand. It will be incorrect to call anyone who is deprived of these capabilities, as an accomplished Shaikh, he is on the contrary, a robber.

'Ain al-Faqar p: 6

Says Mujaddid Alif Thani,

Knowledge of the state of the seeker and the stations of the Path, gnosis of the realities of Divine manifestation, acquisition of kashf and ilham and correct interpretation of events, are the essentials of this office. Without attaining them, any claim of spiritual deputization and sainthood is as good as building castles in the air.

Maktubat Part I, Chapter 4. p: 221

These extracts should dispel any doubts about the conditions and pre-requisites spelled out by the learned author for an accomplished Shaikh. One does, however, wonder as to why the sufi saints nominate persons who do not fulfil these conditions as their successors. It is true that they sometimes do so but only for the purpose of Bai'at-e Wasilat. They are not competent to enforce Bai'at-e Tariq'at. If such a person, out of ignorance, annexes to his name the title of Shaikh-e Tariqah, it does not in any way change the factual position. - Compiler

CHAPTER-VIII

STAGES OF THE PATH

Preliminary Stages

As soon as the Lataif of a seeker are illuminated and he develops a reliable capacity, an accomplished Shaikh conducts him through the Stages of the Path in the following manner. First he is put through a stage of absorption and familiarity; then, the Triple Meditations (Ahadiyyat, Ma'iyyat and Aqrabiyyat), followed by the Triple Circle, meditation of az-Zahir, and al-Batin, (the two attributive names of **ALLAH**), a stroll of the K'abah, two rak'at of Salah and Recitation of the Qur-an therein. Thereafter is the stage of Fana fir-Rasul (a spiritual union with the Prophetﷺ).

Reality of Absorption

Absorption is a state which can truly be felt by one undergoing the experience. Suffice it to say that it is a state in which the physical eyes are closed but the Qalb is fully awake and conscious. One continues to hear and any interruption in the ablution can be felt. There is, however, a great difference between the absorption of the Prophetsعليهم السلام and that of the aulia. In the case of the former it is perfect and does not cause any interference in their ablution while the latter's is not so because of the intervention of sleep: 'Allama Shami in his Durr-e Mukhtar vol: I. p: 105 concludes:

> The consensus of the Ummah is that the Prophetﷺ is at par with his followers as far as interruption of ablution is concerned except during his sleep, for it has been clearly stated in Hadith:
>
> "My eyes sleep but not my heart."

Prophet'sﷺ Ablution Not Nullified by Sleep

The Muslim jurists and the scholars of Hadith are unanimous in asserting that the ablution of the Prophetsعليهم السلام is not interrupted by sleep: Writes, Qadhi 'Ayyadh in his Behr ar-Raiq p: 39 and Shifa p: 281:

> The ablution of anyone who sleeps while resting on something is nullified but not that of the Prophetﷺ. The author of Fatawa-e Qinia explains that non-annulment of ablution is a peculiarity of the Holy Prophetﷺ and this is what all the scholars of Hadith and Muslim jurists firmly believe in.

The author of Fatawa-e Qinia goes on:

> Imam Tahavi in his Mushkil al-Athar and Imam Baghavi in his Sharah as-Sunnah assert that the Prophet’sﷺ ablution is not nullified by sleep: Imam Muhammad narrates with reference to Imam Abu Hanifah that one day the Prophetﷺ slept on his side. As he rose up, he offered his prayers without renewing his ablution and said, “Sleep is confined to my eyes, it does not effect the consciousness of my heart.” This is one of the peculiarities of the Prophetﷺ.

Writes Imam Muhammad in his Kitab al-Athar p: 94,

> Hammad relates with reference to Ibrahim that the Prophetﷺ one day performed his ablution and went to the mosque. The call to prayer was given, the Prophetﷺ lay down on his side and went to sleep which was evident from his snoring; he got up and offered his prayers without renewing his ablution. Hammad continues that the Prophetﷺ is not like others in this matter. Imam Muhammad agrees and reiterates the Hadith, “My eyes sleep but not my heart.” *In fine,* the Prophetﷺ is unlike others, who must renew their ablution, as a matter of obligation, should they similarly sleep. This is the true belief as expounded by Imam Abu Hanifah.

These excerpts establish that all the scholars of Hadith and Fiqh, in particular Imam Abu Hanifah, hold that the Prophet’sﷺ ablution is not invalidated by sleep.

Discussing the subject, the author of Jawahir al-Qur-an vol: I**,** p: 123-124, acknowledges this verdict of the honourable scholars of Hadith but adds, at p: 125, that it is not a matter of law because the Prophetﷺ had in any case slept during Lail at-T‘aris. It is strange that he acknowledges the consensus of the scholars of Hadith in one breath and falsifies it in the other- how deplorable indeed is his egotism! In support of his unscrupulous opinion, he quotes Maulana Hussain ‘Ali as having said that the narrators of this Hadith had suffered a difference of opinion. But the question is: Has even one of them said anything contrary to this well established belief? If so, it should have been quoted. The age-old principle is that, in case of any difference in the wording of a narration, the common factor is taken into account, which in this particular case is that the sleep of the Prophetﷺ does not interrupt their ablution. The wording differs only with regard to the timings of sleep and not the point at issue, and as such provides no support to the author’s opinion.

His comment (p: 125), of course, cannot overrule the consensus of the majority of the scholars of Hadith. As for the reference to Lail at-T‘aris is concerned, all the learned scholars of Hadith and jurists have amply clarified the point, i.e., observation of the sun is the function of the eye, not of the heart. The latter observes subtleties; besides, the possibility of complete absorption unto **ALLAH** cannot be ruled out. The irony is that the

author professes on the one hand to be Hanafi (A follower of Imam Abu Hanifah's School of Thought) and on the other a Shaikh al-Qur-an, despite discarding the Prophet's saying, as well as the consensus of the scholars of Hadith and jurists of the standing of Imam Hammad, Ibrahim, Muhammad and Abu Hanifah. This daring conduct of the author may be further viewed in the light of the narration by one of the most learned Companions, 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas:

The Prophet was immune from any unconscious breaking of wind. Hadhrat 'A'ishah asserts that the Prophet's heart was never inattentive during sleep and as such his ablution was not disturbed. This is one of the endowed attributes of all the Prophets and peculiar to the Prophet's heart, and as such, it facilitated his perpetual attention to Divine inspiration. Abu Daud vol: I, p: 27 and its explanation Bazl al-Majhud vol: I, p: 125.

The Hadith, "My eyes sleep, not my heart." has been quoted in al-Bukhari vol: I, pp: 22, 97, 119 and 254 as well as al-Muslim. Besides, eight narrations have been listed in Khasais al-Kubra vol: I, p: 172 alone.

The majority of Muslims are unanimous that sleep is confined to the eyes and not to the hearts of Prophets. The Prophet communicated this truth to his Companions as proven by the narrations of Hadhrat A'ishah, Ibn-e 'Abbas, Anas bin Malik, Abu Hurairah, Imam Hassan Basri, Bukhari, Muslim, Nowavi, Sayuti, 'Ayyadh, 'Ata Muhammad Khorasani and Abu Hanifah and the scholars of Hadith**,** Hakam and Abu Na'eem. It is also listed in outstanding works on Islamic Fiqh like Behr ar-Raiq**,** Fatawa-e Shami**,** Fatawa-e Qinia and Khasais al-Kubra. In the light of all this, the strictly personal whim of the author of Jawahir al-Qur-an must pale into total oblivion.

Prophets Receive Revelations During Sleep

Said Prophet Ibrahim-,

> *"O my dear son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrifice you. So look, what do you think?" He said, "O my father! Do what you are commanded."* (37:102)
>
> Normally the Prophet was not awakened, until he would himself get up because we never knew what was being revealed to him in his sleep:

Fatah al-Bari vol: I, p: 306

Ibn-e Kathir and al-Bukhari quote Ibn-e Abi 'Umair, an eminent Tab'i: "The dreams of the Prophets are indeed revelations."

Writes ‘Allama Sohaili:

> The angels came to the Prophet at night while he was asleep in a state that his eyes were closed without having an effect on the consciousness of his heart. This is true for all the Prophets.

Raudh al-Anf vol: I p: 343

According to Fatah al-Bari vol: I, p: 307:

> Says Khitabi, that a perpetual consciousness was bestowed on the Prophet’s Qalb so that he could remember what was revealed to him during sleep.
>
> Abu Hurairah quotes the Prophet: “While asleep I saw that I was wearing golden bangles. I felt deeply concerned and was inspired to blow them off.”

Fatah al-Bari vol: VI, p: 40

> States Ibn-e ‘Abbas, “The dreams of Prophets are revelations. They receive revelations both in sleep and while awake.”

Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir vol: III. p: 468/23

Note: The categorical injunction of the Qur-an bears testimony to Prophet Isma‘il’s belief that the dreams of Prophets were revelation. The same belief was held by the Prophet’s Companions as given in the Hadith. Again this was also the belief of their associates and the renowned Muslim jurists, rather, of the entire Ummah as implied at by ‘Allama Sohaili in his Raudh al-Anf, referred to above.

Question: The Prophet missed his morning Salah in the Lail at-T‘aris. If the hearts of the Prophets were perpetually conscious and awake he would have discerned the time of Salah and the sunrise.

Answers: (1) The sun is seen by the physical eye and not by the heart. Due to sleep, the function of the physical eye was suspended. The question is, therefore, absurd.

(2) During the state of absorption, the heart gets deeply preoccupied with the Divine lights and glories and is unmindful of everything else.

Question: In the Hadith under reference, the reason for missing the morning Salah by the Prophet and his Companions is said to be sleep and not absorption.

Answer: To argue about the affected, on the basis of effects, is incorrect. The omission of Salah is an effect and it is possible that the Prophet ﷺ was affected as a result of his absorption, a likelihood supported by other Hadith, while the Companions were affected by their sleep. The fact that absorption has not been mentioned in the said Hadith does not in any way imply that the Prophet's ﷺ sleep caused the omission because any omission due to sleep, according to Hadith is an act of the devil. Since the Prophet ﷺ had **ALLAH**'s protection from the devil's influence, his sleep causing the omission is out of the question. Then there is the principle that any assertion on which a categorical injunction in the Qur-an is not available does not, *per se,* amount to its opposition.

Question: If the negligence of the heart during sleep is not conceded to, an equation with the Creator is established because, *Neither sleep nor slumber overtakes Him* is only *His* Attribute.

Answer: It is proved from the Qur-an that sleep does not overtake the angels[7] nor does it affect the Devil.

Ahya ul-'Ulum by Imam Ghazali vol: III, p: 21.

This indeed is one of the negative attributes in which there can be no equality. Eyes are a creation and it is absurd to draw comparisons between the created and the Creator.

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[7] *They glorify (Him) night and day: they flag not.* (21:20)

The Reality of Meditations

The meaning and the reality of the meditation, Ahadiyyat (Divine Unity), is that creation has nothing in comparison to *Him. To Him belongs everything high or low: None but He is the Everlasting.*

In the meditation termed as Ma'iyyat (companionship) the seeker should contemplate Omni-presence and Omniscience of **ALLAH** on *His* Own account. This should not be mere belief but he should let his heart be overawed by *His* Majesty.

During the meditation termed as Aqrabiyyat (extreme nearness) the seeker should contemplate that *He* is Near, being Omni-present, but Distant by way of perception.

The Triple Circles

In these meditations, the seeker practices driving away all non Divine love from his heart, for **ALLAH** does not tolerate any partner in the voluntary love (as distinct from ingrained involuntary love as of a father for his son) because it amounts to infidelity in love. [8]

The Stroll of the K'abah

Care is exercised in this meditation that a seeker should not think he is meditating the stone masonry of the K'abah but its reality, which is something else. The K'abah is a representation of the transcendent secrets of Divinity, beyond one's imagination. The refulgence of the Being, peculiar to the K'abah, ceaselessly descends on it. Hence the actual status of the K'abah, apparently a stone masonry in the world of creation, is a transcendental mystery beyond the reach of human intellect. It is an object which can be touched, has a definite location, a pattern but its reality defies the bounds of feeling, place and pattern. Such is the grandeur of the K'abah and such is its reality.

> As this meditation sustains and the seeker acquires a certain capacity, he is put through the meditation of Bait al-'Izzah and Bait al-M'amur (the K'abah of the angels on the first and seventh heavens respectively) and he can see for himself the Divine Refulgence from the K'abah right up to the empyrean.

Tafsir-e Mazhari vol: II, p: 101

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[8] The ultimate goal is **ALLAH** Almighty. The lover of the world truly is an infidel.

The Stages of Salik al-Majzubi

Thereafter, he is put through the meditation Fana-o Baqa and taken on to the stages of Salik al-Majzubi. Mark that there is a vast difference between Salik al-Majzub (The Seeker of Absorption) and Majzub Salik. The former is a strict follower of Shari'ah and the latter is not, because his intellect has been damaged (due to over exposure to Divine Refulgence as a result of inept handling by his guide). He is like a blind man or a man blindfolded, who if put in a car and driven from point A to point B, will not be in a position to describe the landmarks en route. He cannot, therefore, benefit anybody. On the other hand, the former has gone through the stages of the Path and is well versed with its details. These stages are indeed sublime but the ignorant masses mistake every insane for a Majzub (rapt seeker) and consider him an accomplished wali. The reason is that sometimes a Majzub displays strange acts which even a disturbed person may also perform because he has a certain degree of concentration as corroborated by Sharah al-Asbab (Exposition of the Means). Care must be exercised about such characters. They should neither be condemned nor exalted to the status of aulia in accordance with the principle enunciated by the Qur-an:

(O man) follow not whereof you have no knowledge. (17: 36)

Therefore, in all such cases a neutral attitude will be in total accord with the Book. However, should a saint with inner illumination identify him as a rogue, he should be taken as such and not an accomplished wali to the insult of Shari'ah.

Beyond this are the transcendental stages of the Path. Though in other Sufi Orders, Salik al-Majzubi is taken as the highest stage; in ours, the Naqshbandiah Owaisiah Order, it is considered as the beginning. Indeed the final limit of Wilayah-e Sughra is Maqam-e Taslim (the Station of Submission). Beyond this is Wilayah-e Kubra. Suffice it to say that, **ALLAH** willing, a seeker can be ushered through the stages of Wilayah-e Sughra to the farthest limit which being in the Realm of Eternity or the Realm of Wonder, naturally takes time. As for the climax of Wilayah-e Kubra, its knowledge has not been confided to any wali nor can anyone acquire it.

Qualifications for the Stages of Wilayah-e Sughra

There are five conditions for covering the stages of Wilayah-e Sughra:

- The Shaikh should not only be an accomplished one but also endowed with Divine authority under whose Tawajjuh the seeker should embark on the spiritual pilgrimage. Constant company of the Shaikh for a considerably long period is essential; occasional attention and company are of little help.
- A contact with the spirit of an accomplished saint should be established. This, however, is beyond the ability of a beginner and is possible only after the preliminary stages of the Path. The method is to go to the tomb of an accomplished Shaikh, establish spiritual contact and receive his beneficence. This also requires considerable time and effort as in the case of spiritual benefit

from a living saint.

- ❖ To obtain beneficence by establishing a spiritual contact with an accomplished Shaikh without going to his tomb.

Note: Beneficence here means spiritual growth which can only be dispensed by the aulia, and not by the ignoramuses who circumambulate and prostrate at the shrines or seek help from saints (in absentia) believing that they have powers to deliver mankind from sufferings.

- ❖ The Shaikh should have a very charismatic personality and should be so thoroughly enriched with Divine lights as to attract and carry along the spirit of a seeker and ensure his spiritual upbringing through Tawajjuh- in absentia.
- ❖ A link should be established between the seeker and **ALLAH** Almighty for direct beneficence, as in the case of the Prophets عليه السلام. The difference is that there is no intermediary between *Him* and the Prophets عليه السلام while a wali must have the Prophet ﷺ as an intermediary and only by following him, in letter and spirit, will he receive Divine beneficence through him. Such men are born after centuries. Just as the Prophets are numerous but the exalted ones are very few, these souls are indeed rare and it is they who hold the exalted offices among the aulia such as Ghauth, Qayyum, Fard, Qutb-e Wahdat though the degree of their beneficence and Tawajjuh varies according to their rank. A single Tawajjuh of a Qayyum is equal to a hundred of a Ghauth and so on. Qayyum, Fard and Qutb-e Wahdat have actually been the offices of exalted Prophets and among the aulia the position of these offices is like that of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Ibrahim عليه السلام and Musa عليه السلام among the prophets.

In these extremely high stages of the Path, the highest office is Siddiq, followed by Qutb-e Wahdat, Fard, Qayyum and Ghauth. There have been numerous Companions who held these offices but, after them few could attain this status. But it must not be mistaken for a moment that despite a common denomination (i.e., the offices bearing the same title), no one can emulate the Companions, because their excellence is undisputed and proved from the categorical Qur-anic injunctions.

Qutb-e Wahdat has three distinct characteristics:

- ❖ The Lataif of anyone who keeps his continuous company over a period, are automatically illuminated without ilqa and he also embarks upon the stages of the Path.
- ❖ If such a disciple of a Qutb-e Wahdat imparts spiritual training to someone else even without formal permission, it will result in the illumination of the latter's Lataif. In fact anyone whose Lataif have been illuminated as a result of his association with a Qutb-e Wahdat can dispensate spiritual beneficence of some degree.

- Qutb-e Wahdat can dispensate spiritual beneficence to his disciples by Tawajjuh in absentia, enabling them to negotiate the stages of the Path. This, however, is neither permitted nor resorted to in the case of a beginner.

Such is the state of closeness between a Siddiq and a Prophet, that where Siddiqiyat ends, Prophethood begins. This point is illustrated by the Quran in the following verses:

> *Whoever obeys **ALLAH** and the Messenger they are with those to whom **ALLAH** has shown favor of the Prophets and Siddiq***.** (4:69)

> *And make mention (O Muhammad) in the scripture, of Ibrahim, Lo! he was a Siddiq, a Prophet.* (19:41)

There is no office higher than Siddiqiyat among the aulia. Beyond this are the stages of the Prophethood to which a wali may have temporal access, like that of an ordinary servant to the royal palace.

We have indicated the reality, the glad tidings, and the secrets which benefit only those who believe in them. And he who has faith in Divine Power and Wisdom, will be able to do so.

CHAPTER-IX

THE WILAYAH OF THE PROPHETS

The origin of the human race and the habitation of the earth is directly traced to Hadhrat Adam who is the fountainhead of all love and affection:

> *Lo, I am about to place a viceroy in the earth.* (2:30)

For this reason **ALLAH** made him the central figure of Daera-e Muhabbat (Circle of Love). There are many other Circles of wilayah peculiar to Prophets; for example, Wilayah-e Esvi, Wilayah-e Musvi, Wilayah-e Muhammadi, besides Prophet Musa privilege of direct speech with *Him* and the Circle of Wilayah-e Ibrahimi.

Prophet Ibrahim suffered numerous trials but remained steadfast. As a reward, he was chosen as *His* Khalil (sincere friend). The Circle of his wilayah is called Maqam-e Khullah. Just as a king has his confidants with whom secrets are shared, it was Kalim-A**LLAH**, Prophet Musa to whom **ALLAH** spoke in confidence. His Circle of wilayah is called Muhibbiyyat (being affectionate). Then there is the chief of the loved ones, Prophet Muhammad. His Circle of wilayah is known as Mahbubiyyat (being a beloved) and Hubb-e Sarfah. Beyond this is the Maqam-e Radha which is described by Imam Rabbani, Mujaddid Alif Thani in the following words:

> Above and beyond kashf and karamah is Maqam-e Radha. This is the farthest station in the spiritual pilgrimage and extremely difficult to attain. Only one out of a thousand striving aulia may succeed.

Ruh al-Ma‘ani vol: XVI. p: 20.

Some learned sufis, like the worthy Imam Rabbani, think that the farthest station of the prophets’ wilayah is Maqam-e Radha. But beyond this are the Circles of Kamalat-e Nabuwwah (excellence of the Prophets). All research scholars agree that these Circles are beyond Maqam-e Radha which cannot, therefore, be held as the highest station. In the meditation of each of these Circles, the focus is on the Divine Essence and an expectation of *His* Favour. *He* is the real object of all the Prophets, the Messengers and the Exalted Ones. Variations occur only in the points of view and as such meditations and the states differ. For example, from the point of view that the Being is:

- The purport of all aspects of nearness, i.e., worship, etc. - this Circle is the Haqiqat-e Salah (Reality of the Salah).
- Flawless, above any needs and limitations- this Circle is the Haqiqat-e Saum, (Reality of the Fast).
- The only One Worthy of Worship and adoration by the entire creation-this Circle is the Haqiqat-e K‘abah.
- The Tenor of all revealed scriptures, the All-Prevailing, the Transcendent and the

> Omnipresent, this Circle is the Haqiqat-e Qur-an (Reality of the Qur-an). The Qur-an represents the All-Embracing and Transcendent Being.

Except the Circle of Haqiqat-e Saum, the other three Circles are the Haqiqat-e Ilahiyah. An access to these is termed as the observation of the Truth. All these Circles are beyond Maqam-e Radha. Thereafter are the Circles of Qayyumiyat, Afradiyat, Qutb-e Wahdat and Siddiqiyat, in that order, the last named being the farthest limit of the Path.

From Ahadiyyat, the first stage of the Path, to the Daera-e ul-al-'Azmi (the Circle of the Exalted Messengers) is halfway on the Path, the remaining half is beyond this. That is why any claim of going over the entire Path by a particular wali or his disciple is at the very least, amazing. Anyone attaining Fana-o Baqa, an initial stage of the Path, should be considered a man of great achievement and should gratefully acknowledge it because:

> *This is the bounty of **ALLAH** which He gives to whom He wills.* (62:4)

All heights attained by the aulia are like the moisture outside a water-skin, in comparison to those of the Prophets. And these can be attained only in a school of piety, from a pious preceptor. It must be remembered that all exoteric knowledge can co-exist in the heart with secular love but not sufi knowledge. To try this combination shall be tantamount to forcing opposites together.

> Every knowledge can be acquired side by side with secular love, which aids such an acquisition, but not sufi knowledge. It cannot be attained without mortifying the carnal desires; it is imparted in a school of piety. Promises **ALLAH**, "Be pious and *I* shall bless you with knowledge."

Fatawa al-Hadithiah

The fact is that Tasawwuf and the Path cannot be attained merely by pronouncing pedigrees, attiring in sufi style caps and robes, displaying long rosaries, arranging festivals on shrines, attending chorus, or esoteric displays of sorts and dancing- the conditions are totally different.

The first and the foremost is total adherence to the Shari'ah which calls for a firm belief in Divine Unity and complete devotion to the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah devoid of any heresy whatsoever: Polytheism and heresy cut across the very roots of *His* Favour.

Again complete loyalty to the Shaikh is essential; antagonism would result in discontinuation of beneficence. The meeting of Prophet Musa عليه السلام and Khidhar as narrated in the Qur-an (18: 60-80) fully illustrates this point. Lastly there is frequent zikr with utmost sincerity and endeavour. With these conditions one may hope to cover the stages of the Path. Insha-**ALLAH**, in a decade or two. Tasawwuf means **ALLAH**'s gnosis and an access to *His* Realities. Its attainment depends upon singular devotion towards *Him,* a devotion altogether absolved of any expectations from *His* creation.

Wilayah-e ‘Ulya, the grand wilayah, a domain of the Prophets is only attained by those who completely identify themselves with the Prophets both outwardly and inwardly. The outward aspect demands following Shari‘ah -in toto- and a firm adherence to the Sunnah. There is no room for complacency in mystic pursuits. The inward aspect signifies that a saint should possess inner illumination just as the hearts of Prophets and Angels are illuminated with **ALLAH**’s light. His heart must be free from all wayward impulses. A wali is not born innocent as the Prophets were, but **ALLAH** willing, he can attain protection from sins, it does not mean that he should abandon his day to day mundane business, he should rather follow the dictum:

“Occupied without, illuminated within.”

An excellent illustration of such a state is given in the Qur-an:

> *Men whom neither merchandise nor sale beguiles from remembrance (zikr) of* ***ALLAH*** (24:37)

It is, therefore, not necessary to renounce the world for the purpose of zikr, but it is essential that no mundane love should enter the heart.

I have spelled out the objectives and the means of attainment. I reiterate that purification cannot be attained by mere study of books and periodicals on Tasawwuf. This invaluable bounty can be acquired only in the company of an accomplished Shaikh, through the process of ilqa and in‘ekas. Though there is a definite increase in the books and journals on Tasawwuf yet they discuss only the form and do not offer the substance.

Highest Stages of the Path

The last limit of wilayah is the Circle of Siddiqiyat. Beyond this are stages reserved for Prophethood. The access of a wali to these stages is similar to that of a menial to the royal palace or like the entry of followers along with their respective Prophets or the companionship of the Prophet’s ﷺ wives with him, in Paradise.

Here is the detail of these sublime stages of the Path:

The Circle of Nearness of Prophets, the Circle of Nearness of the Messengers, The Circle of Nearness of the Exalted Messengers, The Circle of Nearness of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Circle of Nearness of **ALLAH**, the Circle of Union with **ALLAH**, the Circle of *His* Pleasure, the Nearness of *His* Favour, the Ocean *of His* Favour, the Treasure of *His* Favour, the Fountainhead of *His* Favour and *His* Veils. To go through these veils even Prophet Nuh’s عليه السلام age will be insufficient. Beyond these veils are probably more stages of the Path, not unfolded to me so far. It is possible that by *His* Infinite Mercy and *His* Absolute Power these vistas may also be unfolded one day. There are only three methods to reach these stages, namely:

1) That spiritual growth of a wali is undertaken directly by the Holy Prophet's ﷺ auspicious spirit.
2) That beneficence is drawn directly from **ALLAH,** through adherence to the Prophet ﷺ.
3) That beneficence is received through the distant Tawajjuh of the one blessed as per (1) and (2) above.

CHAPTER-X

THE OFFICES OF THE AULIA

Sufi Terminology Derived from Hadith

The misunderstandings prevalent among the masses about the various offices of the aulia and the consequent attempts to create ill-will against them on charges of heresy must be clarified and dispelled. While a detailed discussion follows in the next chapter, a number of Hadith, from an immense treasure on the subject, are:

- Abu Na'eem writes in his Hilya al-Aulia quoting the Prophet ﷺ, "There will be five hundred Akhyar (virtuous) among my followers in every age and forty 'Abdal. This number will not decrease. When one dies from among the latter, the vacancy will be filled, by a Divine arrangement, from the former."

- Narrates Imam Ahmad, "There will be thirty 'Abdal among the followers of the Prophet ﷺ whose hearts will resemble that of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام. Any vacancy due to death of any one will be filled up immediately by Divine arrangement."

- Narrates Tibrani, "There will be thirty 'Abdal among my followers. The earth shall owe its existence to them. They will be instrumental in bringing rains and **ALLAH**'s succour."
- Abu Asakar quotes the Prophet ﷺ, "The 'Abdal are in Syria, they are forty men. They bring rains and victory against your enemies, because of them the afflictions of mankind are removed by the Almighty."
- Narrates Tibrani, "The 'Abdal will be in Syria**,** because of them you will receive **ALLAH**'s help and provisions."
- Narrates Imam Ahmad, "'Abdal are in Syria and they are forty men. Any vacancies due to death are filled up by *His* plan. Because of them you get rains and **ALLAH**'s help in encounters with your enemies. They are also instrumental in averting Divine retribution from the people of Syria."
- Narrates Khalil in his Karamat-e Aulia and Wahlmi in his Musnad-e Firdaos, "'Abdal are forty men and women. Casualties among them are replaced accordingly by a Divine arrangement."

- Narrates al-Hakam, "'Abdal are from among *His* slaves."

- Narrates Ibn-e Abi Dunya, "The identification of 'Abdal among my followers is that they do not invoke curse on anything."

- Narrates Ibn-e Habban, "The earth shall not be without thirty and eighty righteous men, who shall be like Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام. Because of them your afflictions will be removed and rains and provisions shall be bestowed on you."

- Narrates Imam Bahaiqi, “The ‘Abdal from among my followers shall enter Paradise not by virtue of their deeds alone, but by **ALLAH**’s Mercy, munificence of their souls and enlightenment of their hearts.”

- Narrates Ibn-e ‘Adi, “‘Abdal are forty, twenty two in Syria and eighteen in ‘Iraq. Casualties due to death are replaced under *His* arrangement. Doomsday shall follow their passing away, by **ALLAH**’s Command.”

- Narrates Tibrani, “Forty men who are like Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام shall always inhabit the earth. They will be the cause of rains and **ALLAH**’s help to you. When anyone passes away, another will take his place by a Divine arrangement.”

- Narrates Abu Na‘eem, “There will always remain among my followers forty men, whose hearts shall be like that of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام. Due to their blessing, sufferings of mankind will be removed- they are called ‘Abdal.”

- A mention has also been made about Qutb by some of the scholars of Hadith, for example, Abu Na‘eem in his Hilya declares that a number of Hadith are available in corroboration of this point. Narrates at-Tirmizi and Abu Na‘eem, “There will be among my followers some foremost in **ALLAH**’s nearness and they will be there in all ages.”

Note: The above narrations have been critically examined. ‘Allama Sayuti quotes about twenty Hadith from books and narrations on the subject of ‘Abdal. He grades all of them as authentic. ‘Abdal being a common factor in all the aforementioned Hadith, his existence will have to be conceded. The book referred by ‘Allama Sayuti is al-Khabr ad-Dal min Wujud al-Qutb wa Nujaba wal-Abdal.

CHAPTER-XI

OFFICES OF THE AULIA IN DETAIL

‘**A**bdal, Qutb, Ghauth, Qayyum, etc., are titles of various aulia. It is not the belief of the veterans of the Faith and learned sufis, that those elevated to those offices are authoritative, self governing, capable of doing good and bad to others at will, knowers of the Unseen, omnipresent or the objects of prostration for mankind, and that to call for their help (in absentia) is permissible. Some heretics completely misunderstanding the entire issue, have not only themselves gone astray but have also deluded others, while some zealots have, for no evident or apparent reason, objected to the term Ghauth. Both have been carried away by what we call extremism.

That terms Ghauth and Qayyum are found in numerous reference books and many a celebrated monotheist has repeatedly referred to them in his writings. Maulana Hussain ‘Ali has used the term Ghauth several times in his Fawaid-e ‘Uthmaniah. So did Shah Wali Ullah Dehlawi, Shah Isma‘il Shahid, Imam Rabbani and Thna Ullah Panipatti (in his Tafsir-e Mazhari)-may **ALLAH** bless them all.

Ghauth and Qutb

The origin of some of the terms can be traced directly to the Book and Hadith, for example Abrar (holy), Akhyar (virtuous) and Nuqaba. ‘Allama Sayuti has edited a comprehensive treatise on the terms referred to in the preceding chapter. Discussing Ghauth and Qutb in the said treatise, he writes,

- Ibn-e Mas‘ud رضي الله عنه (one of the distinguished Companions) quotes the Holy Prophet ﷺ. “Among mankind there are three hundred Divine bondsmen whose hearts are like that of Prophet Adam عليه السلام, forty like that of Prophet Musa عليه السلام, seven like that of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام, five like that of Jibril عليه السلام**,** three like that of Michail عليه السلام, and only one whose heart is like that of Israfil عليه السلام.”

- Khatib has, through Abu Bakr, Ibn-e Abi Sheba, deduced from the Hadith quoting Kanani that there are three hundred Nuqaba, seventy Nujaba, forty ‘Abdal, seven Akhyar, four Qutb and only one Ghauth.

- Hadhrat Ans رضي الله عنه quotes the Prophet ﷺ, “The earth shall always have forty men like Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام who will be the cause of rains, provisions and Divine help for you.”

According to Majm‘a al-Zawaid, the source of the Hadith is reliable.

Note: The Hadith narrated by Hadhrat Ans has been corroborated by many Hadith, while the one narrated by ‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ud has been elaborated by the Hadith of Khatib. All these go to prove the existence of four Qutb and one Ghauth.

Duties of each Qutb

The duties assigned to each Qutb have been outlined by Imam Rabbani in the following words,

> Qutb-e ‘Abdal is a source of **ALLAH**’s benediction in matters referring to the existence and sustenance of the world, while Qutb-e Irshad is a source of beneficence relating to the rectitude and guidance of mankind. Thus the beneficence of Qutb-e ‘Abdal particularly concerns the genesis of, and provisions to, mankind, removal of their distress, looking after their health and comfort while Qutb-e Irshad is concerned with matters pertaining to faith, guidance, help for good deeds and repentance, etc.

Qutb-e Madar

Thna Ullah Panipatti in his discussion of the meeting of Prophet Musa and Hadhrat Khidhar quotes Imam Rabbani,

> “**ALLAH** has deputed me (Hadhrat Khidhar) as the helper of Qutb-e Madar, who is one of the aulia and to whom the world owes both its sustenance and existence; because of his blessing, the world exists. The Qutb-e Madar is now in Yemen and is an adherent of Imam Shaf‘ai, and I offer my prayers behind him**.**”

The Hadith narrated above by ‘Allama Sayuti with reference to Kanani, continues further,

> “The abode of Nuqaba, Nujaba and ‘Abdal is in the West, Egypt and Syria respectively. Akhyar are travellers while Qutb occupy the corners of the globe. When a calamity afflicts mankind, the Nuqaba raise their hands in supplication, followed by Nujaba, Akhyar, Qutb, and Ghauth in that order till it meets Divine acceptance. This order is not, however, always necessary.”

al-Khabr ad-Dal p: 23

Imam Rabbani describes Qayyum thus,

> The enlightened saint who is like a deputy taking care of the important affairs of mankind. Though rewards descend from the Sovereign *Rabb,* yet they are distributed through him.

Maktubat vol: II, p: 2

Fard and Qutb-e Wahdat

The blessing of these souls is reflected precisely in the Hadith which recounts the supplication of the Prophet ﷺ on the eve of the Battle of Badr,

> "O **ALLAH**! Should this contingent of Muslims perish today, there shall be none left on the earth to worship *You.*"

The perception of Divine Unity and the abundant and speedy dispensation of *His* beneficence are among the characteristics of Qutb-e Wahdat and Fard. **ALLAH**'s gnosis indeed depends on them.

The Accomplished Man

According to Imam Rabbani, Qayyum is an accomplished saint and all Divine beneficence and excellence, both inward and outward, are directly connected with him. His position is that of a deputy. This reality can be clearly seen from the Hadith, "The source and the fountainhead of all favours is **ALLAH** while I am the distributor."

Qayyum deputises the Exalted Messenger. Anyone opposing him stands deprived of all Divine blessing because the antagonist of the deputy is a rebel, and a rebel never gets any favours from his monarch. Everything from the Sovereign *Rabb,* good or bad, is received by the subjects through *His* deputy. When mankind is seized by distress, the Ghauth raises his hands in supplication and the distress is alleviated, if *He* wills. It must, however, be remembered that a Ghauth does not by himself wield any authority, but is only a Mustajab ad-D'awat person. Similarly a Qayyum is a source of all Divine benefactions, while Qutb-e 'Abdal and Qutb-e Irshad are the media of partial Divine favours, each one receiving specified rewards. Qutb-e Wahdat and Fard have direct links with **ALLAH** and, as such, are far superior to Ghauth and Qayyum.

Explanation of the word Ghauth

The literal meaning of Ghauth as an adjective, in Arabic usage, is 'the crier, the suppliant, the complainant' and as a verb 'to call, to complain, to cry.' In sufi terminology, Ghauth is used for that Mustajab ad-D'awat person who cries and supplicates before **ALLAH,** the Arabic lexicon supports this meaning. To interpret this word as 'The one who independently redresses the grievances of mankind' is a common misnomer.

Meaning of the term Mustajab ad-D'awat

It is generally believed that once a seeker grows into a saint after covering the Stages of the Path, his every supplication receives Divine approval. But the fact remains that supplication is, after all, a request and not an order. All supplications of even the Prophets عليهم السلام who are Mustajab ad-D'awat beings, were not granted. The supplication of

the most exalted - Prophet Muhammad, for the removal of dissension from among his Ummah was not accepted. Therefore, to assume that every supplication of a saint is met, amounts to misunderstanding and is a transgression.

According to learned sufis only Ghauth, Qayyum, Fard, Qutb-e Wahdat and Siddiq are the Mustajab ad-D‘awat among the aulia. However, as an exception this favour may be bestowed on others, if **ALLAH** wills. The point to remember is that those who hold these five offices neither wield any authority of their own, nor are they free from adoption of means. They are indeed subservient to the Sovereign *Rabb,* to Whom they raise their hands in prayer. This very act of supplication is a clear proof of their subservience, and they supplicate only when Divine permission to do so is formally granted. In short, the terms Mustajab ad-D‘awat is used for those whose supplications are generally accepted. But it does not mean that non-acceptance in any way belittles their exalted status. On the other hand some prayers of ordinary beings are also granted; even the request of Satan, the outcast, was granted.

My Rabb! Reprieve me till the day when they are raised. (15:36)

Hence no one qualifies as a Mustajab ad-D‘awat, if one or more of his prayers are granted.

Conditions and Etiquettes of Supplication

There is a certain etiquette for supplication before the Sovereign *Rabb* and a number of conditions for its acceptance. The Qur-an and Hadith emphasise that adherence to these conditions is imperative for the acceptance of a supplication:

- The sustenance of a suppliant must be lawful and wholesome. Commands **ALLAH,**

  O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and wholesome on earth... (2: 168)

  O you Messengers! Eat of the good things and do right. (23:56)

  Narrates Ibn-e ‘Abbas, “When these verses were recited before the Prophet, Sa‘ad bin Abi Waqqas stood up and requested him to pray for his becoming Mustajab ad-D’awat. The Prophet replied, “O Sa‘ad! Eat of the lawful food and you will become one. By the *Rabb* in Whose hand is my life, when a human being eats an unlawful morsel, none of his pious deeds receive Divine approval for a period of forty days and anyone who has raised himself up with unlawful provisions. Hell is the proper abode for him.”

  at-Targhib vol: II, p: 547

The Prophet ﷺ quotes from the Qur-an, "*O you who believe! Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you....*" (2:172), and goes on to relate the story of a person, who undertakes a long journey, his hair is disheveled and dusty, who throws up his hands in supplication and cries out. "O *Rabb!* O my Preserver!" but his sustenance is not lawful and wholesome. How can his prayers be granted?

al-Muslim

- Purification of garments, made from lawful earnings.

And the garment of restraint from evil that is the best. (7:26)

And your garments do purify. (74:4)

Said the Prophet ﷺ, "Anyone who earns unlawfully and uses his earnings say, for making a shirt for himself, none of his prayers shall meet **ALLAH**'s acceptance so long as he is wearing that shirt."

at-Targhib vol: II**,** p: 548

- Purification of the body from both minor and major pollution. Declares **ALLAH**,

*...here are men who love to purify themselves. **ALLAH** loves the purifiers.* (9:108)

- Supplication be made before the dawn of each day.

And before the dawn of each day (the pious) would seek forgiveness. (51:18)

- One should turn one's face towards the K'abah while supplicating.
- There must be sincerity of intention and purpose.

*Therefore (O believers!) pray to **ALLAH** making religion pure for Him only.* (40:14)

The Prophet ﷺ said, "The Divine acceptance of deeds is dependent on the sincerity of intention."

- The supplication should be made while sitting in a respectful posture, using the following method:

Spread and raise the hands to the level of the shoulders with the elbows apart. Filled with feelings of perfect reverence and humility, commence the prayer with the Most Beautiful Names of **ALLAH.** The wording of the supplication should be as laid down in the Qur-an and the Sunnah, seeking intercession of the Prophets and the aulia. At the end slip the hands over the face.

Tuhfa tuz-Zakirin p: 41

- Every supplication should be preceded by a noble act.
- It should not be against the norms of sympathy for the kith and kin and mankind.
- It should not be for things unlawful and sinful.
- It should not be for obvious impossibilities.
- No undue haste should be shown towards immediate acceptance and in the case of non-acceptance, one should not cease to supplicate.
- Righteousness is a pre-requisite for becoming Mustajab ad-D‘awat as per the Quranic injunction,

*...**ALLAH** accepts only from those who are righteous.* (5:27)

And the righteous have been defined by the Prophet in these words:

No one can become righteous until he refrains from a thing though apparently lawful, yet may lead to something unlawful.

at-Targhib, vol: II, p: 559

Note: It is imperative for the righteous to shun doubtful wealth, food, garments etc., because anyone who eats what is unlawful will have the Fire as his abode and the dweller of the Fire cannot be righteous.

Non-acceptance of the Supplications

Those whose supplications are not answered should not be blamed, for it is normally due to non-fulfilment of any of the conditions laid down for the purpose, for example: (1) due care was not exercised in the matter of food and garments, or (2) undue haste was shown, or (3) it was for something sinful or was against the norms of sympathy for the kindred, or (4) it was granted but attainment of the objective was delayed in the best interests of the suppliant or for some other reason in Divine knowledge.

Fatah al-Bari vol: III, p: 22

Note: It is a fact that sometimes, a supplication though accepted, manifests the effect after a lapse of time. For example, the prayer of Prophet Musa, for the ruination of Pharaoh, was granted but only after forty years. Prophet Y‘aqub proclaimed, “*...shall ask*

forgiveness for you of my Rabb." (12:98), but its effect appeared after eighteen years. Similarly the prayer of Prophet Zakariah عليه السلام was granted but his son was born after thirteen years.

Writes 'Allama Ibn-e Hajr on the subject.

> The acceptance of supplications of a person who is habituated to and loves to such an extent that he remains conscious of *Him* in every breath, asleep or awake is a widely recognised fact. Such a man is Mustajab ad-D'awat and is blessed with the acceptance of his prayers. And this state of perpetual absorption is achieved by one whose heart has completely rejected all non-Divine impulses. And this is possible in only Zikr-e Qalbi.

Fatah al-Bari vol: III, p: 23-27

Notes: *In fine,* a Mustajab ad-D'awat is one who has cultivated a sincere connection with **ALLAH**, whose heart has ceased to be attracted by the creation, who has purified his soul, and who is perpetually remembering **ALLAH**.

These attributes are only found in accomplished aulia. Therefore, they are Mustajab ad-D'awat persons.

Shaikh Ibn ul-Hammam in his book Salat al-Mominin, recommends that a supplication should be preceded by these words:

> Al-Hamd-o li **ALLAH**-i Rabbil 'A-lamin; al-Hay yil-Qayyum al-'Aliy yil-'Azim war-Rahman nir-Rahim as-Sam'i al-'Alim al-Awwal al-Qadim al-Halim al-Hakim. Hamdan kathiran, tayyiban, mubara-kan, fihi hamdan yo-afi ne'amahu wa yukafi mazi-dahu wa la tuhsi thna-an 'alaihi, huwa kama athna 'ala nafsihi falakal-hamdu hatta tardha.
>
> Praise be to **ALLAH**, the Sustainer of the worlds, the Living, the Eternal, the Self-Subsisting, the Exalted, the Almighty, the most Gracious, the most Merciful, the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing, the First, the Eternal, the Compassionate, the Wise. All praise be to **ALLAH**. Sincerely blessed, in it has the praise that equates and fulfils *His* Grace (Beneficent) countless. Thanks be to *Him* as *He* deserves thanks for *Himself* until satisfaction.

Then he should say:-

> **ALLAH**-humma salli wa sallim wa sharrif wa karrim wa 'az-zim 'ala Ra-sulika say-yidina Muhammad-e nin Nabiy-yil ummiy-yil tahir riz-zakiyyi wa 'ala alihi-tay-yiblna wa sahbi-hil-muhaqiqina wa sallim 'alaihim tasli-man 'adada zakara az-zakiruna wa ghafala 'an zikri-himul ghafilun.

> O **ALLAH**! peace and blessings be on *Your* exalted Messenger, our Master, Muhammad, the unlettered Prophet ﷺ, the pure, the sinless and upon his good family, his truthful and sincere Companions and peace be on them as much as the zikr of those who do zikr, and as much as the forgetfulness of those who keep him not in their remembrance.

Now he should ask **ALLAH** for what he wishes.

CHAPTER-XII

THE AULIA AS DESCRIBED BY THE PROPHET ﷺ

The real value of a human being, his greatness and his excellence will come into limelight on the day his Register of Conduct is produced before the Almighty. Hearing glad tidings of supreme triumph, a true bondsman will receive immense Divine blessings. That indeed will be the real success, true emancipation and everlasting glorification, which in other words is called grand success of the Hereafter and eternal bliss. The ephemeral pomp and show of this world is nothing but an illusion and self-deceit,

> *The life of this world is but comfort of illusion.* (3:185)

The Splendour of the Aulia on the Day of Judgement

Narrates Ibn-e 'Abbas رضي الله عنه, "There will be some people seated on **ALLAH**'s right on *His* Tremendous Throne on the Day of Judgement. They will be on pulpits of light, their faces gleaming with Divine Light. They will neither be Prophets, nor martyrs nor Siddiqin. The Prophet ﷺ was asked who they would be, and the answer was repeated three times to emphasise the point, "They would be the ones who loved each other for the sake of **ALLAH**."

Narrates Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, "There are some Divine bondsmen other than the prophets who will, on the Day of Resurrection, be envied by Prophets and martyrs." The Prophet ﷺ was requested to identify them so that they be held in esteem. He replied. "They are the ones whose hearts have been flooded with Divine Light. As a result they hold each other dear in spite of being neither kindred nor of a common lineage. Their faces will be radiant and they will be seated on thrones of Divine Light. When others will look terrified and grief stricken, they will be resplendent and without any sign of worry, whatsoever." He then recited this verse.

> *Lo! Truly the friends of **ALLAH** are (those) on whom fear (comes) not, nor do they grieve.* (10:62)

Note: The aulia described in the above Hadith are those devout and sincere bondsmen who remember **ALLAH** ceaselessly and spend their lives seeking inner purification through endeavour, toil, abstinence and prayer. Of course, the Prophets عليهم السلام and their true successors rank far above them, for they are a source of guidance and reformation of mankind. The Prophets عليهم السلام will be questioned, on the Day of Judgement, about their Ummah but the aulia under reference will be free from such a responsibility. The envy of the Prophets عليهم السلام and the martyrs will be on this account. Those exempted from reckoning on the Day of Judgement will indeed be enviable.

The Aulia in Worldly Life

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Anyone who ceases to depend on the creation and gives himself to the Creator receives sustenance from sources unimaginable.” He quoted a Divine declaration, “Anyone who bears enmity with *My* friends, *I* declare war against him. The most valued worship of *My* bondsmen, seeking *My* nearness, is the one *I* have imposed on him: and *My* servant continues to draw near *Me* through supplemental works, until *I* love him. And when *I* love him, *I* am his ears so that he hears by *Me,* and his eyes, so that he sees by *Me* and his feet, so that he walks by *Me* (not in the physical sense but signifies perpetual Divine guidance and favour). When he raises his hands in supplication *I* grant his requests, and when he seeks refuge with *Me, I* protect him.”

‘Allama Tufi said that the above Hadith forms the basis of the Divine Path, leading to eternal love and *His* nearness. It explains the method for the attainment of Ihsan, a composition of an inner obligation, i.e., Iman and an outer one, i.e., Islam, as defined in Hadith-e Jibril. Ihsan is the moral worth and status of the seeker such as abstention, sincerity, meditation etc.

Degrees of Divine Nearness

It has already been stated that the two pillars of wilayah are (1) complete adherence to the Shari‘ah and (2) total occupation of the inner self with the lights of Reality. The meaning of wilayah is *His* nearness which can be attained by two means, (1) obedience to *Him* and (2) total abstinence from every sin.

> Human beings prove their friendship by *His* obedience and piety which in turn begets *His* protection and succour.

Fatah al-Bari M‘a Bukhari vol: XI, p: 237

Concerning this Hadith, narrated by Imam Bukhari, three grades of Divine nearness have been established:

- of Obligatory Worship:
- of Supplemental Worship and
- of Highest Esteem.

Nearness through Obligatory Worship

The first grade implies that a Divine bondsman should completely mortify his identity, which in sufi terminology is Fana-e Zat, i.e., he should become an instrument in the Hands of the Creator.

> *Lo!* ***ALLAH*** *has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth, because the garden will be theirs.* (9:11)

Nearness through Supplemental Worship

The advancement towards *His* nearness achieved through *His* worship is limitless. Writes Imam Razi,

> Just as the Divine Light peculiar to various grades is abounding, the journey of a sufi saint in these exalted grades is also endless. It is an unfathomable ocean, a craving without limit. Glorified be the *One Who* bestowed such nearness on *His* friends.

Tafsir-e Kabir

Note: The Ruh is not composed of matter which may disintegrate, but is something more subtle than the Angels. Its abode is in the Realm of Command, beyond the Throne. Once associated with the human body, it tends to forget its home; in addition, its power of levitation either exhausts or becomes extremely weak. When an accomplished saint re-introduces it to its home, and constancy at zikr is achieved, its wings are restored, its levitation returns and it stands illuminated with the Divine Light.

> "When the sacred celestial lights reflect on the Ruh, its levitation is given a fillip by their beneficence and it starts levitating towards its native home ardently."

Nearness of the Highest Esteem

A Gnostic attains this grade when each cell of his body is completely rid of every non-Divine influence. From this very Hadith Ibn-e Qayyam has, in his Kitab ar-Ruh, established that the heart of the wali resembles a polished mirror enabling him to perceive the reality of everything.

> So his heart resembles a polished mirror reflecting the reality of things. His judgement does not err, forgiven the Divine Light, he sees and hears things in their true perspective.

Note: This, in addition to proving the veracity of kashf, proves the meditation termed as Ruyat-e Ashkal (literally, observation of figures). Yet, in spite of such a marvellous spiritual advancement a sincere seeker and a true sufi continues to strive for further progress.

> This Hadith proves that a bondsman, even after attaining the exalted title of Divine beloved, continues to seek further progress, because it implies diffidence, humility and true bondsmanship: For a human being, ‘Abudiyyat (Divine bondsmanship) is the highest honour.

Fatah al-Bari vol: XI, p; 273

Notes: This Hadith of al-Bukhari establishes the following facts:

- Obligatory worship is the capital investment while the supplemental is the profit.
- Divine nearness, peculiar to supplemental worship cannot be attained without obligatory worship.
- The various grades of Divine nearness are dependent upon proper execution of both obligatory and supplemental worship.
- The various exalted offices of the aulia depend upon the degree of Divine nearness attained.
- Divine nearness is not confined to the exalted offices alone.
- Any wali, who attains Muhibbiyyat (highest Divine esteem) becomes Mustajab ad-D‘awat.
- To bear enmity or grudge against a wali leads to a tragic and woeful end.
- Ilham is an authority for the recipient provided it is not against the Shari‘ah.

Identification of the Aulia

There are two pillars of wilayah, anyone holding them firmly is a wali. Writes Imam Razi,

> There are two attributes of wilayah which facilitate identification. First is adherence to the Shari‘ah and the second, absorption of ones’ inner-self into the lights of Reality. When both of these are found in a bondsman with a pronounced sustaining capacity, he is certainly a wali.

Tafsir-e Kabir vol: V, p: 471

This argument has been contested by some on the ground that a saint may be called devout, or a man of ilham and kashf but it is difficult to call him a wali, because it is not possible to establish whether he has been proclaimed as such by **ALLAH.** This question is answered in al-Mishkat in these words, “The chosen bondsmen of **ALLAH** are those whose very sight inspires *His* remembrance.”

This test, if performed casually about a person, will not carry conviction. Its implication has been explained by Imam Rabbani in his Maktubat vol: II, p: 92, in the following words,

> The aulia are holy persons who invite mankind to the path of **ALLAH,** prescribed by the Shari'ah externally and internally. First, they call the seekers to repentance and persuade them to carry out their obligations enjoined by the Shari'ah. Secondly they advise with emphasis on constancy. It is obvious that a wali does not stand in need of any supernatural powers for the said purpose. Wilayah entails the type of guidance which has nothing to do with the supernatural or karamah. In short the *sine quo non* (the indispensable qualification) of a genuine wali is that in his company one should feel an inclination towards things Divine and an aversion to matters mundane.

The Distinction of the Aulia

The author of Tafsir-e Mazhari writes in the explanation of *al-Saba* vol: XII, p: 22,

> Some sufi veterans at times, attain freedom from time and space and see the past and the future before them. This fact is supported by an authentic Hadith. According to 'Abdullah Ibn-e 'Abbas: Once a solar eclipse occurred during the Prophet's time. He led a number of his followers in Salat-e Khasuf (a special prayer for such occasions) and stood praying for an unusually long period. We watched him step forward then backward as if attempting to get hold of something. Asked later, he explained. "I saw Paradise in front of me and wanted to pluck a bunch of fruit therefrom. Had I been successful, it would have lasted you till the end of the world."

It would be incorrect to interpret that the Prophet saw an image of Paradise as in a dream, for such a notion is rebutted by himself that he saw Paradise itself and not its image.

Notes:

- An enlightened saint sees everything, for example, the stages of the Path, Bait al-M'amur, Sidrat al-Muntaha, Paradise, Hell, the Empyrean, the Divine Throne, The Guarded Tablet,[9] fruits and rivers of Paradise, Angels, Spirits, Jinn etc. This view is real, for all of the aforementioned realities have no images.

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[9] The Guarded Tablet- Placed in the Seventh Heaven containing records of all events destined to occur from the beginning to the end of the universe. -Translator

- The aulia, or the sufi saints, though they remain physically on the earth, yet their spirits attain freedom from time and space.

Enmity with the Aulia is Enmity with *Him*

It is an established principle that knowledge is in harmony with the known and if the latter is sublime the former will automatically be so.

> *I created jinn and mankind only that they might worship Me (and recognize Me).*
> (51:56)

The reality explained in the above famous verse, should be pondered over in the light of this principle. The aim of creation will be fulfilled with the attainment of *His* gnosis. Therefore, to bear enmity with the aulia, who help in attaining this aim, amounts to utter lack of insight.

> The punishment in the Hadith under reference, where **ALLAH** declares war against those who bear enmity with *His* friends, should be an eye-opener for those who renounce the aulia. Anyone at war with **ALLAH** cannot attain salvation. The distinguished scholars of the Ummah agree that those who (1) renounce the aulia and (2) indulge in usury, are at war with **ALLAH**. Each one of them is likely to die without faith because these are the acts of the infidel. The least punishment for those who renounce the aulia is that they remain deprived of their beneficence and are likely to meet a tragic end. While some other enlightened men maintain that if anyone is found indulging in the persecution of the aulia and rejects their beneficence, be sure, that he is at war with **ALLAH** and is far removed from *His* Mercy.
>
> Fatawa al-Hadithiah vol: II, p: 285

> States 'Abdullah Ibn-e 'Umar, that his father one day went to the Prophet's mosque. There he found Ma'az, another Companion, weeping by the Prophet's shrine. The Caliph said, "Whosoever bore enmity with a wali has indeed opposed **ALLAH. ALLAH** is pleased with such of the pious bondsmen who live in obscurity and are neither searched for nor recognised when seen. Their hearts are the beacons of guidance and they have rid themselves of every possible darkness, i.e., are spared of every type of ignorance and its resultant evil."
>
> at-Targhib vol: III, p: 444

Note: There are two major disadvantages of bearing enmity with the aulia. First is the deprivation of their beneficence in the world; the other, the danger of a tragic end. Both stand proved from the Hadith under reference.

CHAPTER XIII

ZIKR

Absolute Zikr Enjoined

Zikr is enjoined by the categorical injunctions of the Qur-an in scores of verses with emphasis on its frequency. It is absolute as to the quantum and manner, i.e., neither any upper nor lower limit of its duration is laid, nor any restrictions on its method (individually, collectively, standing, sitting or reclining) are imposed. Therefore, this commandment covers every manner and number. To insist on any particular mode or to object to another as heresy is, therefore, improper. Such an attitude is tantamount to impeding zikr, an act denounced by the Qur-an in the following words:

> *Those who debar (man) from the path of **ALLAH** and would have it crooked.* (7:45)

Ruh al-Ma'ani elaborates this verse: "They are those who prevent the seekers from the Path leading to *His* communion and intend its diversion by misrepresenting it with a view to induce aversion in the heart of a seeker, to deviate him from the right path in the same manner as the heretics and dissimulators do."

In light of the above, it will also be improper to confine zikr only to Salah, recitation of the Holy Qur-an, declaration of *His* Praise, Kalimah, Darud Sharif, etc., and to argue that the sufi methods of emphatic recitals, etc., are outside its pail. As zikr is absolute, all forms and types mentioned above, including sufi methods, will be included.

Zikr Besides Salah

It is proved beyond doubt from the following categorical injunctions of the Qur-an that besides Salah and Nawafil there is some other method of zikr also:

> *When you have performed Salah, remember **ALLAH**, standing, sitting and reclining. And when you are in safety observe proper worship: Salah at fixed hours has been enjoined on the believers.* (4:103)

> *Men whom neither merchandise nor sale beguiles from zikr and constancy in Salah.* (24:37)

> *And when Salah is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of **ALLAH**'s bounty and remember **ALLAH** much.* (62:10)

The first verse enjoins that after the believers are free from Salah, they should engage themselves in their mundane business and remember **ALLAH** much; here Salah and zikr are separately mentioned. In the second verse Salah is mentioned after zikr, while in the third zikr is placed in the middle. In all these verses, zikr is enjoined besides Salah which

is subject to fixed timings. On the other hand, the condition of frequent zikr defies the limitations of time. Therefore, it is established that there are other modes of zikr besides Salah.

Zikr Besides Recitation of the Qur-an

The Prophet said, “Be resolute in the recitation of the Qur-an and **ALLAH**’s zikr. In return you will be remembered in the heavens and it will be a source of light for you on earth.”

This Hadith is in the form of a wish which the Prophet expressed to one of his Companions, Abu Zar Ghaffari. It establishes:

- The recitation of the Qur-an and zikr are mentioned with a conjunction, establishing their separate entities. Therefore zikr is distinct from the recitation of the Qur-an for which the word ‘reading’ or ‘reciting’ is used. However, the term zikr is used for the Qur-an itself but not for its reading or recitation.

Everyone does not remember the Qur-an by heart and to do so, or to read the entire text, is a collective obligation[10] as distinct from an individual obligation, whereas zikr is obligatory on all Muslims.

- The important condition attached to zikr is frequency as the Qur-an enjoins its performance under all circumstances. On the other hand, the recitation of the Qur-an is neither possible at all times, nor under all circumstances, for example; during sleep, while engaged in business, at the time of answering the call of nature or during the period of major impurity following intercourse
- The ultimate aim of zikr is *His* communion, i.e., the Name disappears but the Named is retained in the heart. On the other hand, the Qur-an contains events of the past, examples, commandments, type of worship and matters of mutual dealings. Its recitation is aimed at comprehension of the commandments and not retaining only its Name in the heart, and parting with the commandments. In this connection it is necessary to draw on the meaning of the verse:

  And do you (O Muhammad) remember your Rabb within yourself.

(7:205)

Here zikr means Zikr-e Qalbi and not the Qur-an, because reading of the Qur-anic commandments relates to oral recitation, whether within or outside the Salah, and it must be remembered that Salah is not performed if the recitation is done with the heart and not by word of mouth.

Question: It was stated earlier that zikr is absolute, but here it is restricted to Zikr-e Qalbi only.

Answer: This is just to restrain those who argue that increase in Nawafil and Salah fulfils the obligation of zikr, calling other forms a heresy, despite the fact that all forms are covered by the categorical Qur-anic injunctions. It has also been specifically proved from the Qur-an that zikr is not confined to Salah only, though it is also a superior and sublime form of zikr. Thus Zikr-e Qalbi has been proved from the Qur-an (as also the fact) that it is the only type which is possible under all circumstances and not Salah or the recitation of the Qur-an.

Frequent Zikr Enjoined

Wherever zikr is enjoined in the Qur-an, in most cases, the condition of frequency has been added, for example:

> *O you who believe! When you meet any army hold firm and remember **ALLAH** much so that you may be successful.* (8:45)

> *...whoever looks towards **ALLAH** and the Last Day and remembers **ALLAH** much* (33:21)

> *And men who remember **ALLAH** much...* (33:35)

> *O you who believe! Remember **ALLAH** with much remembrance.* (33:41)

Ibn-e Kathir while explaining the verse: *uz-kur **ALLAH**-a zikran kathira (remember **ALLAH** much) writes:*

> Ibn-e ‘Abbas رضي الله عنه explains that **ALLAH** has not enjoined any worship on *His* bondsmen of which a limit has not been prescribed and the excuse of an handicapped not accepted. The only exception to the rule is where neither a limit is laid down, nor has the excuse of anyone been accepted save that of a lunatic. Rather zikr is enjoined under all circumstances, i.e., sitting, standing, reclining, day or night, by word of mouth or within the heart, on land or on the sea, static or in motion, in prosperity or adversity, in sickness or health, irrespective of the state (eating or drinking, chaste or polluted, selling or buying, asleep or awake).

Ibn-e Kathir vol: III, p: 495

Types of Zikr

There are three types of zikr:

a) Oral, loudly;
b) Oral, silently;
c) Spiritual, within the heart, i.e. Zikr-e Qalbi

> The first type, according to the consensus of the ‘Ulama, is an heresy except where absolutely necessary, for example, the Azan, the Takbir (pronouncement heralding the commencement of Salah), formal sermon as in Friday and Salat-Eid congregations, etc.

Tafsir-e Mazhari vol: III, p: 410

Zikr-e Qalbi’s Superiority

The third type is Zikr-e Qalbi. This is the type which has nothing to do with words by the mouth, and as such, cannot even be discerned by the Kiram an-Katibin.[11] Imam Abu Y‘ala narrates, quoting Hadhrat A‘ishah (a scholar of deep understanding), that the Prophet once said:

> Zikr-e Khaffi which cannot be discerned by the Kiram an-Katibin is seventy times superior to other types. On the Day of Judgement, mankind will be called to reckoning by *Him* and the Kiram an-Katibin directed to produce the Register of Conduct of everybody. The Angels will be commanded to re-examine the records to see if any of their good deeds remained unrecorded. They would submit that everything within their reach has been duly put down. **ALLAH** shall inform them that a good deed which they could not discern and hence were unable to record was Zikr-e Qalbi. I, the narrator, assert that Zikr-e Qalbi neither snaps, nor is liable to any interruption.

Tafsir-e Mazhari vol: III, p: 41

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[11] *Generous and Recording. Know all that you do. (3: 11-12).* The Kiram an-Katibin are the two recording Angels deputed to every human being, to record his deeds, good or bad, performed by each bodily organ. So exceedingly efficient is their perception that anything heard, observed, spoken or whispered, the slightest movement of any of the organs of the body at any time- asleep or awake- is instantly recorded, just as an efficient video recorder does not miss any sound, or movement. However, one thing which they are unable to discern as brought out in the above Hadith, is what goes on inside the human heart or his breath. Hence, their inability to record Zikr-e Qalbi, also called Zikr-e Kaffi.

-Translator

Superiority of Zikr-e Khaffi in the Qur-an

And do then (O Muhammad) remember your Rabb within yourself humbly and with awe… (7:205)

When he cried to his Rabb, a cry in secret. (19:3)

In this verse, **ALLAH** remembered one of *His* friends and appreciated his act of crying to *Him* in secret (Zikr-e Khaffi). Imam Razi writes in the explanation of this verse that **ALLAH** sent this command to Prophet ﷺ, closely followed by the command to preach what was revealed to him: *That you O Muhammad remember your Rabb within yourself….* The advantage is that one benefits fully only when zikr attains the state of secrecy, for Zikr-e Kaffi is closest to sincerity and humility.

Tafsir-e Kabir (Glossary) vol: IV, p: 504

Note: Zikr-e Khaffi guards a beginner against dissimulation and enables an accomplished seeker to attain complete freedom from non-Divine love and to eternalise in *Him.* This is supported by Hadith: Whoever knows **ALLAH** assumes silence.

According to Tafsir Abi S'aud:

As sincerity is predominant in Zikr-e Khaffi, it is nearest to Divine acceptance

Tafsir-e Kabir vol: IV, p: 504

Notes:

- Divine acceptance of a worship is related to the degree of sincerity attending it, Zikr-e Khaffi is the highest in this respect.
- The very object of worship is *His* acceptance and Zikr-Khaffi is most likely to achieve it. For this very reason a vast majority of veteran sufis have adopted it. Some Sufi Orders adopt Zikr-e Jahar i.e., spoken loudly, for the beginner, but ultimately lead him to Zikr-e Khaffi.

***In** fine*, a number of Qur-anic verses relate to zikr, some emphasising frequency, and others urging zikr of *His* personal name (**ALLAH**). Yet others imply Zikr-e Khaffi, the only form which ensures plenitude and perpetuity. The most comprehensive verse in this context is:

And do you (O Muhammad) remember your Rabb within yourself humbly and with awe, below your breath, at morn and evening. And do not be of the neglectful. (7:205)

Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Bannori explains this verse in his Nafkhat al-'Amber min Hadi Ash-Shaikh-Anwar p: 135:

> Shaikh Anwar Shah Kashmiri said, "We confine ourselves strictly to the meaning of this verse. It pertains to zikr and not to Salah, though the latter is also a form of zikr. It implies Zikr-e Qalbi whereas Salah is Zikr-e Lisani (lingual). That is why the condition of humility and awe has been added here, awe is the act of the human heart." Another verse in the Qur-an clarifies this point thus:
>
> *They are (believer) whose hearts feel fear when **ALLAH** is mentioned…* (8:2)

According to Hadith in at-Tirmizi, under the caption, 'Features of the Gates of Hell,' **ALLAH** shall command: "Take out of the Hell Fire even the one who remembered *Me* for a day or who feared *My* reckoning."

This discussion establishes the following points:

- Zikr here means Zikr-e Qalbi.
- Zikr-e Qalbi is superior to Zikr-e Lisani.
- Zikr leads to deliverance from Hell.
- Zikr is ordained morn and eve and,
- The defaulter is regarded by **ALLAH** as neglectful.

In our Order, the Naqshbandiah Owaisiah, sincere efforts are made to act upon this verse, in toto, and follow it in letter and spirit under all circumstances.

Superiority of Zikr-e Khaffi in Hadith

States Abu Sa'eed Khudri رضي الله عنه, a renowned Companion, that he heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying,

> "The best zikr is Zikr-e Khaffi."

at-Targhib vol: IV, p: 160

States Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas رضي الله عنه, that he heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم saying,

> "The best zikr is Zikr-e Khaffi."

at-Targhib vol: II, p: 537

Though absolute zikr is enjoined yet we have drawn only on the one in vogue, inherited from the righteous of the past and the veteran sufis, the superiority of which is amply expounded by the Qur-an and Hadith. Fully conscious of the order of precedence, we consider all obligations (towards *Him* or *His* creation as enjoined by *Him)* as the capital, supplemental acts as the dividend, and Zikr-e Khaffi, as the most superior of all types of zikr. This is in conformity with the teachings of the Book and Hadith, the purification of the heart which guarantees real success is obtained through it.

> *Lo! those who ward off (evil), when glamour from the devil troubles them, they do but remember **ALLAH** and behold them seers!* (7:201)

This means that when the pious are disturbed by the sneaking whispers of the devil, who tries to induce heedlessness into their hearts, they engage themselves immediately in zikr and remember **ALLAH**. *He* removes the devil's influence from their hearts, which resume observation of the Reality.

Notes:

- It shows that zikr is contingent upon piety which, in fact, is its door. Zikr leads to kashf which is the gateway to the supreme triumph – *His* gnosis. The devil incessantly play his tricks which have no effect on *His* slaves, unlike those overpowered by lustful desires. Declares **ALLAH**,

  ...surely the devil's strategy is ever weak and insignificant. (4:76)

- The devil's guile vanishes instantly with zikr and he has no power over Divine bondsmen.

  Surely, as for My slaves, you (devil) have no power over any of them... (15:42)

  Yet, inversely, the devil does control the reins of his own friends:

  His power is only over those who make a friend of him. (16:100)

- When the devil takes (firm) hold of a person zikr pales into insignificance. Consequently carnal desires get the better of him as illustrated in the Qur-an,

  The devil has engrossed them and so has caused them to forget zikr. They are indeed the devil's party. Truly it is only the devil's party who will be the losers... (58:19)

CHAPTER-XIV

HALQAH-E ZIKR

In the previous chapter, it has been discussed that zikr is absolute, by way of quantum and manner. For this reason learned sufis, keeping in view necessity, suitability, and propriety, adopted the form they considered most effective. In some cases they prescribed zikr individually and in others collectively. But some ignorant folk brand the collective form, the Halqah, a heresy. This is not only a serious error, in light of the principle explained above, but a heresy by itself.

Proof of Collective Zikr

> *(O Muhammad), restrain yourself along with those who cry to their Rabb at morn and eve seeking His Countenance only…* (18:28)

The Arabic text expression *m'a alla zina* (along with those) occurring in the above verse, proves the collective form of zikr and Halqah-e Zikr. It also proves the superiority of this form, as the Prophet ﷺ was commanded to restrain himself with those so engaged in zikr.

Corroboration by Hadith

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه quotes the Prophet ﷺ,

> "Groups of Angels keep looking for persons engaged in zikr. Whenever they find such a group they summon their companions, rejoice over their discovery and cover it with their wings, right up to Heaven. (When the Angels return to their *Rabb* to describe the scene) they are commanded to bear witness to *His* forgiveness announced for every one in that gathering. One of them submits that a particular person was present only by chance and not for the purpose of zikr. **ALLAH** says, "This is (such an august) assembly that no one present in it shall be deprived of *My* forgiveness."

al-Bukhari vol: 2, p: 948

Notes: This Hadith establishes the following facts:

- To convene Halqah-e Zikr is a noble act which the Angels are constantly in search of. It should be noted that the participants and the Angels have one factor in common, i.e. engagement in zikr.
- Zikr is the only worship for which **ALLAH**'s forgiveness has been announced.
- To seek the intercession of the righteous and the company of saints is commendable. Even a dissolute person may attain salvation by associating himself with those engaged in zikr.
- The association of a believer with a wali, even for short period, may pave the way for his redemption.

Gatherings for Zikr Enjoined

> "Should I not inform you of the best deed, which will guarantee your salvation in this world as well as in the next. Listen! Hold fast on to the zikr gatherings."

al-Mishkat p: 467

Notes:

- To seek and to participate in the gatherings for zikr is emphatic and imperative.
- Such gatherings provide the means for success in this world as well as in the next.
- Zikr attracts **ALLAH**'s blessings and leads to peace and satisfaction of the heart.

Halqah-e Zikr

According to Faidh al-Bari (vol: 2, p: 315), 'Allama Ibn-e Hajr 'Asqalani had established Halqah-e Zikr in Egypt. However, it ceased to exist after sometime and was re-established by 'Allama Sayuti, but it met the same fate once again. This shows how particular were the eminent scholars of Hadith in organizing Halqah-e Zikr. According to Faidh al-Bari (vol: 2, p: 262) it was a normal feature with our pious precursors to organize Halqah-e Zikr after each Salat.

The particular Sunnah of zikr after Salah is proved from many a Hadith. According to Madkhal Ibn-e Hajj, all pious precursors, i.e. the Companions and the Tabi'in used to establish Halqah-e Zikr after Fajr (morning) and 'Asr (afternoon) prayers within the Masajid. Their zikr sounded like the buzzing of bees. This manner of Zikr-e Khaffi or Pas Anfas is a distinctive feature of the Naqshbandiah Order.

Practice of the Sufis is based on the Quran and Sunnah

The aurad-o wazaif (articulate utterances in praise of **ALLAH),** usually recited by sufis after Salah have been adopted from Hadith. Imam Bahaiqi quoted the Prophet ﷺ with reference to Hadhrat Ans رضي الله عنه (a Companion),

> "To engage myself in zikr with those so engaged from morning to sunrise and after 'Asr to sunset is dearer to me than the entire world and everything within."

Fatawah al-Hadithiah vol: 1, p 65

In Abu Daud, an authentic compilation of Hadith, Hadhrat Ans quotes the Prophet:

> "To associate myself with a gathering, engaged in zikr, after the morning prayer till sunrise, is dearer to me than freeing four slaves from the dynasty of my forefather, Prophet Isma'il. Similarly, I prefer joining such a gathering after the 'Asr prayer till sunset to freeing four slaves."

States Abu Na'eem quoting the Prophet, "The gatherings for zikr attended by Angels, who cover the participants with their wings, while peace and tranquility descend on them. **ALLAH**'s grace encompasses them and they are remembered by *Him* in return."

Imam Muslim and Imam Ahmad state that when believers assemble for zikr, Angels immediately cover them with their wings and the Grace of **ALLAH** descend on them, bestowing consolation and tranquility. In return, **ALLAH** remembers them in the presence of *His* confidants.

> Since it is established that sufi gathering and practices, in the morning and in the evening, are strictly in accordance with Hadith, there is no justification for any objection.

Fatawa al-Hadithiah vol: 1, p: 65

The verse quoted in the beginning of this chapter, has been elaborated upon in Fatawa al-Hadithiah as explained above. Hence Halqah-e Zikr is permitted by the Quran and Hadith.

Halqah-e Zikr Proved from the Quran

Tafsir Kalam al-Maluk, explains the verse,

> "*Lo! We subdued the hills to hymn the praises (of their Rabb) with him at night-fall and sunrise. And the birds assembled…* (38:18)

> That the hymn of the hills and birds, were audible, is evident from the Qur-anic text and is further supported by the kashf of numerous aulia. This brings out determination and mutual reflection of blessing among those assembled and secondly that the participants in the assembly can control the diversion of attention during zikr. An assembly for zikr has a marvellous effect in warding off spiritual fears and in invigorating determination.

This commentary shows that Halqah-e Zikr, i.e. collective zikr, is fully supported by the Quran. The commentator has also indicated the consequent benefits. The felicity and invigoration of the soul are easily perceptible, but Divine blessing can only be discerned by those who are spiritually illuminated. Its marvellous effect as a whole, defies description. People, accustomed to playing with words, are incapable of appreciating spiritual states and emotion, and consequently seek consolation in outright denial.

CHAPTER-XV

THE SUPREMACY OF ZIKR

Zikr- Superior to All Forms of Worship

As a reward for **ALLAH**’s zikr, the Quran promises the believer a bounty par-excellence:

Therefore remember Me, I will remember you… (2:152)

This promise is exclusively for the one engaged in zikr and it is obvious that none can be luckier than him who is remembered by **ALLAH**. It also explains *His* declaration:

Truly zikr is the most superior… (29:45)

Since no form of worship is superior to **ALLAH**’s zikr, the highest reward, “I will remember you…” has been reserved for those who remember *Him.*

The Prophet’sﷺ Constant Occupation in Zikr

Narrates Hadrat A‘ishah, “The Prophetﷺ remained occupied in zikr *kul-e ahyanehi* (all of his time).”

Note that the expression ahyan, preceded by kul, means continuous zikr without a break, whereas the Quran speaks of the numerous engagements of the Prophetﷺ **,**

Surely you have by day a chain of business. (73:7)

Moreover there are some occasions when oral zikr is not possible (e.g. during meals, sleep, or conversation), while in some, oral zikr is prohibited (e.g. while answering the call of nature); on such occasions the Prophetﷺ probably adopted Zikr-e Qalbi.

The Prophetﷺ Graded Zikr Superior to all Worship

Abu Saeed Khudri records his conversation with the Prophetﷺ, “I asked him what type of worship would be held in the highest esteem on the Day of Judgement?” Heﷺ replied, “Those who constantly remember **ALLAH** will be the most esteemed ones.” I sought a clarification whether they would also surpass the one who strives in the way of **ALLAH**. The Prophetﷺ replied, “If the said striver wields his sword against infidels till it breaks and is himself besmeared with blood, even then those who remember **ALLAH** would surpass him.” Kitab az-Zikr p: 19

Zikr- Superior to both Physical and Fiscal Worship

Hadrat Abu Dardah quotes the Prophet , "Should I not inform you of the most virtuous deed, far superior and rewarding, which shall raise you highest in His esteem, which is better than spending gold and silver in His cause, and is also preferable to waging war against infidels and seeking their extermination?" The Companions replied that they would be honoured to know it. The Prophet said, "Zikr is by far the best deed."

Kitab az-Zikr p:20.

Zikr is the Believer's Fortress

The Prophet once addressed his Companions, "I command you to constantly remember **ALLAH**. It will provide you with protection like a fortress to a fugitive pursued by a fast moving enemy. Likewise, zikr is the only effective refuge against the onslaughts of the devil."

Shunning Zikr is Synonymous with Allegiance to the Devil

> *And he who loses sight of or shuns zikr, We assign to him a devil who becomes his (constant) companion.* (43:36)

> *The devil has engrossed them to forget zikr. They are the devil's party.* (58:19)

Both of these verses clearly establish that shunning zikr amounts to cultivating friendship with the devil. Therefore a heedless person leaves **ALLAH**'s party and enters that of the devil.

May **ALLAH** protect us all.

CHAPTER XVI

TAWWAJUH AND TASARRUF:

SPIRITUAL ATTENTION AND INFLUENCE OF THE SHAIKH

As was highlighted earlier, Islamic mysticism, for all its practical purposes, is reflective in nature. The company of a Shaikh is imperative in order to make any progress in this field. To obtain his Tawajjuh, and beneficence (Faidh), it is equally important to place absolute trust and confidence in him. Tawajjuh, Tasarruf, Himmat (resolution) and Jam'a Khatir (tranquility) are technical terms in Tasawwuf the Qur-an being their source:

> *And We supported him ('Isa) with the Holy Spirit…* (2:253)

That is, the Angelic attribute predominated over the human attribute. The Prophet ﷺ prayed in favour of Hassan bin Thabit رضي الله عنه, a Companion, "O **ALLAH**! Support him with the Holy Spirit (the Angel Jibril عليه السلام)."

Note: The above Qur-anic verse and Hadith prove inner support and influence. The inner support to Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام was manifested as a blessing of Angelic attributes and he took his abode in the celestial world. On the same analogy, the Divine support invoked by the Holy Prophet ﷺ definitely implied inner support. He supported for ilqa and ilham by the Holy Spirit into the heart of Hassan bin Thabit رضي الله عنه to enable him to versify and thereby disgrace the infidels.

Examples from the Qur-an

> *How you were enemies and he made friendship between your hearts so that you became as brothers by His grace…* (3:103)

> *When your Rabb inspired the Angels, (saying) 'I am with you. So make those who believe steadfast and firm…'* (8:12)

The point to ponder is, how did the Angel's influence the believers and help them to be steadfast? Obviously by strengthening their hearts through ilqa in order to help them fight the infidels with full confidence.

Tawajjuh and Tasarruf in the Light of the Prophet ﷺ's Conduct

When the Prophet ﷺ was in the cave Hira, Jibril عليه السلام came and said three times, "Read" and twice the Prophet ﷺ replied, "I cannot read", then Jibril عليه السلام embraced him and he was able to read.

Writes ‘Abdullah bin Abi Jamra, an illustrious wali and an outstanding traditionalist, in the explanation of this Hadith from al-Bukhari,

> This Hadith proves that the Angel Jibril came in contact with the body of the Prophet, one of the means of distributing beneficence. Such a contact generates refulgence within, enabling the beneficiary to bear the burden of revelation. Therefore, the physical contact of Jibril with the Prophet led to the initiation of the aforesaid spiritual state. Moreover, the Prophet was enabled to hear the voice of the Angel, (which) he had never heard before. This is the method inherited by the true followers and veteran sufis.

Bahjat an-Nufus

Note: In our Order, a beginner is given Tawajjuh three times on the lines of the above Hadith. This is the method inherited by us in the chain of transmission, extending right up to the Prophet.

Hadith- Ubay bin K‘ab

The first person account of Ubay bin K‘ab, a Companion, is given in al-Mishkat p: 192, in the following words. He says,

> The urge to falsify Islam grew stronger in my heart. When the Prophet saw me, he smote my chest with his hand which drenched me in sweat. I felt as if I was in the audience of **ALLAH**.” The author of Mirqat comments, The grace of the Prophet’s hand removed heedlessness and led to the instant attainment of observation and perception of Divinity.

Notes:

- The very object of Tawajjuh is to ward off neglect and intensify the light of Iman.
- The incident of Ubay bin K‘ab shows that Tawajjuh leads to intrinsic manifestation.
- Years of personal toil and endeavour cannot achieve what a single Tawajjuh of the Shaikh can give.
- The stages of the Path cannot be covered through private endeavour with the Tawajjuh of a Shaikh as it is a process of inspiration and reflection.
- To benefit from Tawajjuh it is imperative that the heart should have the capacity to absorb and assimilate. The heart of Abu Talib, The Holy Prophet’s uncle, was devoid of this capacity which accounts for his deprivation.

The distinctive feature of Tasawwuf and the Path is the attainment of particular stations in the spiritual pilgrimage (Shami vol: IV, p: 239) which, in turn, depends on the Tawajjuh of an accomplished Shaikh. This should not be mistaken as an innovation on my part, its origin can be traced back to Hadith, for example:

- Fatah al-Bari vol: I, p: 89. This Hadith (Hadith-e Jibril) is prominent among the fundamentals of Faith and is one of the basics of Islamic sources. It is a sacred trust of the saints, a cherished goal of the seekers of the Path, a treasure for the enlightened and a code of conduct for the righteous. As a rule, erudite 'Ulama advise a seeker to keep company with the righteous, this will generate their respect and regard, thereby protecting him from evil influences and sinful tendencies.
- Tufah tul-Qari vol: I, p: 21 (A manifest proof of Tawajjuh):

  "So Jibril got a firm hold of me and wrapped me in his embrace." The externalists argue that it was a sort of caution to draw the attention of the Prophet for the purpose of accepting revelation. But the enlightened 'Ulama contend that this embrace was an internal beneficence and facilitated domination of Angelic attributes over human qualities. The first embrace was meant to drive out mundane impulses of the heart; the second, to free it for revelation; and the third, to generate affection. Thus the Book and the Sunnah prove the origin of spiritual influence practised by the sufis. The Command to the Angels, *I am with you. Hold the believers steadfast,* meant support through inspiration and spiritual influence.

In our Order, the beginner is given Tawajjuh three times, strictly in accordance wit the aforesaid Hadith. The first restores his spirit to its true form, the second drives out ominous influences and the third illuminates the heart. This enables him to embark upon the spiritual pilgrimage, where success is not conceivable without the Tawajjuh of an accomplished Shaikh.

> So **ALLAH** send *His* revelation to the Prophet who wrapped himself in a mantle. I requested 'Umar that I longed to see the Prophet in the process of receiving revelation. When convinced that I was serious, he lifted a corner of the mantle. I saw the Prophet in a state of breathlessness, the condition which overtakes a young camel in a state of ecstasy.

Bukhari vol: I, p: 241

This shows that the Prophet ﷺ was overtaken by a state of breathlessness at the time of revelation. The origin of Pas Anfas, the method in which breathlessness is experienced and the mantle is wrapped around, is directly traceable to this Hadith. So is the meditation after zikr, signifying a state of expectation of Divine beneficence, a state experienced by the Prophet ﷺ while waiting for Divine commandments during Revelation.

Chapter XVII

KASHF AND ILHAM

Means of Attaining Knowledge

Human beings attain knowledge from three sources:

- Sensory Organs.
- Imagination and Intellect.
- Inner Illumination.

The first has its foundation on senses and observation; the second on the principle of transition from the known to the unknown, and the third is through spiritual inspiration from the unseen. Revelation, speech, understanding, gnosis, knowledge from *His* Presence, observation, kashf, ilham and intuition are the different forms of this spiritual inspiration.

> Except for the resplendent Revelation (through Jibril عليه السلام), all types of spiritual inspiration from the unseen are termed as kashf and ilham. With the passing away of the last of the Prophets Muhammad ﷺ, resplendent revelation came to an end, while the latter persists.

Tabqat Ash'arani p: 8

Knowledge handed down to posterity stems from the third category and its attainment is dependent upon tradition, which can be true or apocryphal. Just as there are 'Ulama who can correctly judge the veracity of tradition in Shari'ah and differentiate between truth and falsehood, there also exist spiritually illuminated sufis, well versed in matters of kashf and ilham who can distinguish between true and false inspirations. It is, however, a fact that there are too many of the former and too few of the latter. But the lack of intuition does not nullify its existence. It is also beyond a doubt that the knowledge pertaining to kashf and ilham is from the Invisible source and so is the knowledge of Shari'ah. The difference between the two is that the latter is categorical, while the former is Zanni.

Absence of Kashf a Tremendous Veil

The absence of kashf is a tremendous veil between the Creator and *His* creation. *He* declares.

> *No, but surely on that day they will be veiled from their Rabb.* (83:15)

Imam Razi asserts that it can be logically proved that the punishment of being veiled is severer than the torture of Hell Fire, as the following verse suggests,

> *Then lo! they will truly be burnt in Hell.* (83:16)
>
> Take note that veiling has been mentioned before the Hell Fire. The infidels, referred to in these two verses, even in this world, were behind a veil from the *Rabb.* The punishment exists but they do not perceive it, because of their preoccupation with mundane affairs and deep involvement in worldly pleasures, just as a benumbed body-organ in contact with fire does not feel the pain though the effect of fire exists. The lack of feeling is due to numbness which, once removed, the torture will be felt with full severity; similar is the case of an infidel. When his spirit departs from the body, the punishment of veiling from the *Rabb* is felt in its full intensity.

Tafsir-e Kabir vol: VI, p: 419

Conditions for Kashf

There are two prerequisites for kashf and ilham,

1) One must be blessed with a wholesome heart because such a heart is endowed with inner perception, by which it acquires intrinsic knowledge in the same manner as it acquires extrinsic knowledge with the help of sensory organs.
2) One must adhere to Shari'ah, in toto.

The first is a Divine bestowal, while the second is a self acquisition. Anyone fulfilling these conditions will be blessed with healthy ilham and spiritual inspirations from **ALLAH**. On the contrary, a person having corrupt beliefs, bearing unsound conduct and lacking in sincerity cannot possibly deserve such a blessing.

Whisper of the Soul and the Devil's Inspiration

> *Surely! the devils do inspire their minions.* (6:121)

A number of similar verses prove that the devils also whisper into the human heart but under specific circumstances:

> *Shall I inform you upon whom the devils descend! They descend on every sinful and false one.* (26:221-222)

This shows that the inspiration of the devil is confined only to those who have sunk deep into infidelity and heresy; the myths attributed to yogis, pundits and other non-believers, fall into this category.

The Criterion for the Veracity of Kashf and Ilham

- ❖ Just as the first condition for kashf is bestowal in the form of a wholesome heart, the criterion for its veracity is also a bestowal, i.e., accurate intuition. Like the human stomach, which does not absorb a fly but vomits it out instantly, a wholesome heart does not accept the devil's inspiration, feels restless and rejects it at once.

- ❖ Every kashf and ilham shall be judged in the light of the Qur-an and the Sunnah and in case of a disagreement it shall stand rejected; otherwise, the recipient should take it as emanating from **ALLAH**.

- ❖ The Shari'ah does not necessarily go into detail. It just indicates what is a positive (virtuous) and a negative (sinful) facet of life. And where it is silent, either aspect is possible. Therefore kashf and ilham, which confirm a negative or a positive aspect will be reliable but where negative appears as positive, or vice versa, it will merit rejection.

Hence the denial of true kashf, ilham and Divine inspiration as sources for acquisition of knowledge, amounts to the rejection of age-old precepts of the Faith itself.

The Proof of Kashf from the Qur-an

> *And when the Angels said, "O Mary! Surely **ALLAH** has chosen you and made you pure, and has preferred you above (all) the women of the world."* (2:32)

> *And when Saul set out with the army he said. "Surely! **ALLAH** will try you by (the ordeal of) a river…"* (2:249)

> "*O Mary! Be obedient* to the *Rabb, prostrate yourself and bow with those who bow (in worship).*" (3:43)

> *(And remember) when the Angel said, "O Mary! surely **ALLAH** gives you glad tidings of a word from Him…"* (3:45)

> *And when I inspired the disciples saying, "Believe in Me and in My messenger..."* (5:111)

> *Then they found one of Our slaves, to whom We had given mercy from Us, and had taught him knowledge from Our Presence.* (18:65)

> *We said, "O Zul-Qarnain! Either punish or show kindness."* (18:86)

> *Then We sent to her Our spirit (Jibril عليه السلام) and it assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man.* (19:17)

And We inspired the mother of Musa, saying suckle him... (28:7)

Truly We gave Lukman wisdom saying, "*Give thanks to* ***ALLAH.***" (31:12)

Tilka 'ashratun kamilah - (That is a complete ten)

Note: The sciences, pertaining to kashf and ilham are proved from the Qur-an, irrespective of the fact as to whether they are categorical or Zanni, their existence as such cannot be denied. Therefore, a denial would amount to rejection of the above Qur-anic injunctions.

Question: Is it not 'Ilm-e Ghaib (knowledge of the Unseen) to discern what is in another person's heart through kashf?

Answer: This is known as Kashf-e Qulub. It is not the knowledge of the Unseen, which is defined as limitless and personal, nor acquired through any media. The knowledge of the aulia is not personal but is derived through kashf and ilham, it is not eternal but created, not Hudhuri but acquired. Ib'n-e Qayyam, while discussing kashf and ilham writes,

> This is not the knowledge of the Unseen but a knowledge which has been put by the Knower of the Unseen into an enlightened heart a heart free from wayward impulses, evil dispositions and superstitious tendencies. These are moral ailments which preclude a heart from perceiving realities[12].

Kitab ar-Ruh p: 29

Note: This proves that kashf is not the knowledge of the Unseen, and that it is bestowed upon those chosen few whose hearts are pure and fully imbued with Divine love. It has also been established that these Realities are not disclosed to yogis and non-believers.

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[12] The best state of a person in this earthly existence is his assiduity in worship: This is the first stage in human bliss and is the very purport of the verse. "*You alone do we worship*." Resoluteness in this state for a span of time results in the manifestation of Divine lights. But the recipient ascribes this consistency, not to personal ability but solely to *His* Favour. This is the intermediary stage of excellence and illustrates the verse. *You alone do we ask for help.*

> As he advances along this path, it dawns on him that the only source of guidance is **ALLAH** and all lights, manifestations and refulgences are attained solely through *Him* and this is the meaning of the verse. *Show us the straight path.* According to some of the 'Ulama this prayer does not denote the final goal unless coupled with the verse. *The path of those whom You have favoured,* which implies that a seeker aspiring for guidance and manifestations has no alternative but to follow an accomplished Shaikh who would lead him on the correct path and guard him against going astray.

Tafsir-e Kabir, vol: 1. p: 142

The Difference between Kashf and Ilham

> Kashf and ilham are two separate entities. According to Imam Rabbani, kashf is nearer to what is termed as sensation by the logicians while ilham is closer to intuition. Probably ilham is more accurate than kashf because the latter is lifting of the veil from something, and the former is a direct inspiration onto the heart.

Faidh al-Bari vol**:** I, p: 19

Kashf and ilham are two forms of Divine notification and the latter is closer to accuracy.

The State of Barzakh

The period between death and Resurrection is called Barzakh. The dwellers of Barzakh, i.e., the dead, are said to be in a Barzakhi state. The affairs of the terrestrial as well as the celestial world are revealed to them. The Prophets experience this revelation even in their earthly existence, and so do the aulia, who have enlightened themselves through the refulgence of their Prophets.

For the aulia, the state between sleep and consciousness is the state of Barzakh. In the case of Prophets, kashf or ilham sets in at the time of revelation which is their state of Barzakh. The aulia experience this state in absorption as the rightful successors of the Prophets in both cases the terrestrial connections are suspended for the time being. This state of absorption is neither consciousness nor sleep, but is the state of Barzakh in which kashf or ilham is received.

The point has been further elucidated in Faidh al-Bari vol: I, p: 26,

> At the time of revelation the Prophet passed into the state of Barzakh without formal death, it coincided with the time of revelation. Most of the events of Barzakh are disclosed to the dead. The Prophet was specially endued to witness the events of Barzakh at the time of revelation when many Divine secrets were disclosed. The aulia also experience the Barzakhi state in which they are inspired with numerous Divine secrets. In their case this state is acquired from the realm of Prophethood, as the Hadith suggests, "The dream of a true believer is a 46th part of Prophethood." The author of Mushkalat al-Qur-an writes at p: 274. "What a wali observes during kashf is not due to his personal achievement, it is a blessing of his Prophet."

.........(cont‘d)

According to Imam Razi only those persons are blessed with intrinsic manifestations who after finding an accomplished Shaikh, and providing that they are sincere in their search, are steadfast and talented are elevated to high ranks by **ALLAH**.

Imam Ghazali observes:

Kashf is bestowed on a pious person, who is steadfast in zikr. Piety is the gateway to zikr and zikr the gateway to kashf.

Ahya ul-‘Ulum vol: II

Says Shaikh ‘Abdul Qadir Jilani, Ghauth al-A‘azam (the greatest of the Ghauth):

He who has strong faith and a firm belief observes with the eyes of his heart all affairs of the Hereafter, as revealed by **ALLAH**. He observes the Paradise, the Hell, the Clarion and the angel who holds it and the reality inherent in everything.

al-Fatah ar-Rabbani address dated 18 Zilq‘ad 545 A.H.

The Ghauth al-A‘azam has not simply declared faith as a source of kashf but a strong faith and a firm belief. Undoubtedly a strong faith cannot be had without the special favour of **ALLAH**.

Says Shaikh al-lslam,

The effects of zikr, in the form of Divine lights, ilham, kashf or karamah etc. are helpful only if unsought for, and manifest by themselves.

(Maktubat no. 33, vol: XXX)

Here kashf is described as an effect of zikr and those who do zikr are indeed **ALLAH**’s chosen bondsmen.

Prophets and the Aulia have Pre-vision of the Future

- Faidh al-Bari (vol: 1, p: 182): Ba Yazid Bustami, a celebrated saint, passed by a Madrissah and from the breeze blowing from its direction, predicted the emergence of a future wali. It materialised in the person of Abu Hassan Kharqani, a century later. Similarly the Prophet ﷺ once said, "I see Divine lights in the direction of Yemen." Owais of Qarn was born there. This Hadith, also, is a proof of the existence of the semblance of something before its formal existence.
- Faidh al-Bari (vol: III, p: 334): I have said that things have a sort of pre-existence. The Prophet ﷺ foresaw calamities, which befell after him. These calamities had a certain pre-existence, and the Prophet ﷺ had observed them through kashf.

According to Ruh al-Ma'ani vol: 1, p: 233, the aulia in their corporeal existence, stroll in an earthly Paradise,

> The learned sufis hold that Paradise, where Hadhrat Adam عليه السلام was lodged after his creation, is the Barzakhi paradise on earth, near Jabl-e 'Yaqut. In a state of kashf sufis stroll in it spiritually, not physically.

People see various things in their dreams and no one wonders at it; the aulia have similar vision while awake. Just like the eyes are closed during sleep and all physical and mental activity is suspended, the aulia sit in a darkroom, close their eyes and concentrate on **ALLAH.** In this state they are blessed with kashf. Mullah 'Ali Qari writes in his Mirqat vol: I, p: 2,

> During zikr darkness of the room helps to enlighten the heart.

According to Faidh al-Bari vol: 1, p: 1 7,

> What the aulia see through kashf, and the Prophets عليهم السلام with their insight while awake, cannot be seen by others.

Everything has a form and an essence; the eyesight views only the form, while the insight penetrates right to the essence.

The difference between the externalists and the enlightened saints is described in Faidh al-Bari vol: 1, p: 18,

> The 'Ulama of the Shari'ah do possess a searching eye but the learned sufis are blessed with subtle observation. The former act on formal Shari'ah, while the latter have an access to its spirit and essence through kashf, and regulate their engagements and practices accordingly. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Every verse of the Qur-an has an apparent as well as an inner meaning, and everything has a limit, but deprived indeed is the one not blessed with insight."

The best illustration of the difference between form and essence is furnished by the anecdote of Prophet Musa and Hadhrat Khidhar as described in the Qur-an- (18: 65-82). Some self-conceited and deluded persons treat the knowledge of the reality of things and of Divine secrets, as the knowledge of the Unseen, and as the latter is an exclusive attribute of **ALLAH**, they deny the kashf bestowed on the aulia. This baseless argument has been refuted in an earlier chapter. In fact they do not accept the Qur-an and the Hadith as their guide, but pretend that their conduct has the approval of **ALLAH** and *His* Prophet. That is why they believe in the Qur-an and the Hadith only to the extent to which both seem to conform to their self-generated beliefs and conduct.

Faidh al-Bari (vol: I, p: 151) discusses these basic facts,

> Take a careful note that the five aspects of the Unseen[13] pertain to affairs of creation and not to Shari'ah. That is why they have not been disclosed even to the Prophets. The Qur-an proclaims that the knowledge of the Unseen is the exclusive domain of **ALLAH** and none besides *Him* has any access to it. Since the Prophets are raised to expound the Shari'ah, they are concerned with its laws and not with matters of creation. Moreover, these five aspects represent the fundamentals and not odd minor details. The knowledge of the latter is conferred by **ALLAH** even on *His* aulia. As a matter of fact, it cannot be described as knowledge since it is subject to change.

Writes Mullah 'Ali Qari in his Mirqat vol: I, p: 76,

> Should you argue that since **ALLAH** has confided the knowledge of these five aspects of the Unseen to *His* Prophets and the aulia to a great extent, it cannot be called an exclusive domain of **ALLAH**. My reply is that this exclusiveness is with regard to fundamentals and not minor details or stray incidents. The Prophets and the aulia are given the knowledge of the latter which in no way compromises the principle of exclusiveness.

Writes Imam Ghazali in his al-Munqiz min-adh-Dhalal p: 50,

"Manifestations and observation of Divinity are experienced even in the initial stages of the Path. Seekers, while wide awake, observe the spirits of the Prophets and the Angels, converse with them and benefit from them." - **Compiler**

[13]The knowledge of the Hour, the rain, that which is in the wombs, what each soul will earn tomorrow and in what land will it die. (31: 34). - **Translator**

The inability to see beyond the outward form of objects is a great handicap and is a kind of punishment. This point has been discussed in detail in Mirqat vol: I, p: 151 under the explanation of the verse.

> *And he for whom **ALLAH** has not appointed light, for him there is no light.*
> (24:40)

According to learned sufis, this hindrance is a torture of the worst order.

Another issue worthy of consideration is about the pre-existent form of objects, revealed to the Prophets عليهم السلام and the aulia. Some people maintain that the things foreseen in kashf, appear as images. This is a baseless conjecture for the following reasons:-

- ❖ An image is a post-existent phenomenon while we are discussing the pre-existent form.

- ❖ The image of a human being will be a shadowy image of a person. Who can say that this image is of a particular person, when that person neither exists, nor is visible? What is seen in a dream does not actually exist. Its existence is visionary and vanishes immediately.

The existence of things disclosed in kashf is like the existence of ideas in the mind of an orator which he intends to express during his speech. If the speech is supposed to have an image, then the speech, as well as its subject matter will relate to the image and not to the ideas intended to be expressed. Similarly, the design of a house in the mind of an architect takes shape eventually in the form of a stone and brick structure with the help of external materials. It cannot be said that there was an image of a house in his mind. *In fine,* the mental picture forms the basis of the physical shape it subsequently adopts with the help of external materials and the effort expended. Likewise, the existence of everything is predestined. It is in *His* eternal knowledge, and at its appointed time manifests itself in formal existence.

In summation, the shape of everything is predetermined before its formal existence, and limited knowledge of odd minor details of what has to appear in this world is granted by **ALLAH** to *His* Prophets and aulia. When something is revealed by **ALLAH**, it ceases to be Ghaib (unseen). The knowledge of the Unseen is defined as the knowledge beyond the limits of human senses and intellect. Therefore, anything that can be seen or perceived cannot be called 'The Unseen'. Another attribute of the knowledge of the Unseen is that it must be personal and not acquired. Lastly, it should be enduring, endless and boundless. Any knowledge which is not personal but acquired through revelation, kashf, inspiration or a dream cannot be termed as knowledge of the Unseen except by the totally ignorant.

Kashf and Ilham fall in the Category of Revelation

And the aforesaid is an ilham which is a form of revelation made to Prophets.

Fatah al-Bari vol: XII, p: 315

Difference Between Kashf and Dream

Dreams can be interpreted in a number of ways and according to certain rules. While every human being dreams, ilham is vouchsafed only to the virtuous and the chosen few.

Fatah al-Bari vol: XII, p: 315

Kashf and Ilham Denied to the Delinquent

The Prophet ﷺ called Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه, a 'Muhaddith', and added that there had been such men among the followers of the foregone Prophets. This proves that ilham is a covert inspiration and a reality. The delinquents are deprived of it because they are overpowered by the whispers of the devil.

Fatah al-Bari vol: XII, p: 315

The Denial of Ilham is Condemnable

Said Ibn-e Samani, "The denial of ilham is condemnable. **ALLAH** may honour any of *His* slaves with ilham."

Fatah al-Bari vol: XII. p: 315

Kashf and Ilham- only for the Aulia

We do not deny that **ALLAH** may honour any of *His* bondsmen, and strengthen his inner perception through *His* light. In fact it is a light which **ALLAH** may bestow on whomsoever *He* wills.

Fatah al-Bari vol: XII, p: 315

Kashf has a Revolutionary Effect

And the wizards fell down prostrate, crying. "*We believe in the Rabb of the worlds, the Rabb of Musa and Harun*" (). Ibn-e Kathir (vol: II, p: 237) comments on this verse.

> The wizards of the Pharaoh, pitched against Prophet Musa rose from their prostration only after they had actually witnessed Heaven and Hell and the recompense of the Hereafter.

Note: Such is the revolutionary effect of kashf. The wizards of Pharaoh renounced royal companionship and material rewards. They gladly embraced death because the truth had been manifested to them through kashf, which instantly changed their lives.

True Faith Stems out of Manifestation of the Truth[14]

> One day I happened to pass by the Prophet. He said to me, "O Harith! How are you today?" "Believing truly, O Messenger of **ALLAH**." I replied. "And what", asked the Prophet, "is the truth of your belief?" I answered, "I have turned my back to this world. In earning my livelihood, I no longer have an eye on the creation, I worship *Him* by night and fast by day, and it is as though I behold the Throne of my *Rabb* coming forth, and the people of Paradise taking joy together, and the people of Hell bemoaning together." The Prophet said, (repeating it three times) "O Harith, you have seen the Reality, so hold it fast."

Ibn-e Kathir vol: II**,** p: 286

[14] Imam Ghazali has discussed various types of faith:

1) To confess only by declaration, i.e., by word of mouth. This is the faith of hypocrites. Allah forbid!
2) To corroborate it by the heart. This is the faith of the Muslim masses.
3) To witness the truth of the faith through kashf. This is the faith of *His* confidants. Beneath apparent causes they behold the Hand of **ALLAH** Almighty manipulating all events.
4) To see *Him* manifest in everything. This is the observation of *His* true and sincere friends.

al-Murshid al-Amin p; 228

True Faith is Peace of the Heart

The peace of the heart is the foundation of true faith. Then comes full belief in matters relating to Barzakh and in the events of the Day of Reckoning, as if the believer is witnessing every event with his own eyes. Such a person is said to really believe in the Day of Judgement, as claimed by Harith in the Hadith quoted above, which drew the Prophets comment, "Here is a believer whose heart **ALLAH** has illuminated."

Note: This proves that true faith comes after peace of the heart, which in turn is obtained by zikr as enunciated in the Qur-an :

*Truly, in the remembrance of **ALLAH** do hearts find peace.* (13:28)

True faith means the illumination of a believer's heart to such an extent that he beholds the Throne of the *Rabb,* from where *His* Commandments are issued, the events of Barzakh, Paradise and Hell. This is called kashf and this is the indication of true faith.

Question: And what do you say about the other Companions, of whom such events have not been recorded?

Answer: Absence of record does not connote absence of kashf. The former is not sine quo non for the latter. The incidents of kashf of the Companions recorded in Hadith are innumerable. Only a few examples have been listed above, as a detailed study of the same is not intended here.

In fine, kashf and ilham are inner inspirations forming part of the attributes of Prophethood and its heritage. They constitute a guideline after the end of Prophethood and direct revelation through Jibril. This Divine bounty is bestowed to prophets and is inherited only by their true followers. It has nothing to do with evil-doers and is confined only to a chosen few, whose hearts are illuminated with true faith.

This discourse has drawn on longer than intended. The reason is that while some of our neophytes are bestowed with and talk about Kashf-e Qubur, the quasi-maulvis, bereft of inner light as they are knit their brows and scold. The self-styled claimants of wilayah, who have coined for themselves the lofty titles of 'His Highness', 'Leader of the Path', 'Master of the Mysteries of Shari'ah', 'Qutb al-Aqtab' etc, should feel ashamed at their ethereal bankruptcy and they indulge in loose talk of all sorts to uphold their vanity. Some of them claim that such attributes are reserved for their ancestors and progeny without assigning any reason for this family reservation. Others reject outright kashf and ilham, on the plausible excuse that the real goal is to acquire *His* Pleasure, forgetting that kashf and ilham are after all manifestations of *His* Pleasure, denied to those with whom *He* is displeased. Still others, giving vent to their envy in a seemingly scientific manner, say that kashf is a zanni (speculative) affair and as such of no consequence. They are confounded, of course, when asked,

- Whether all of the books of Fiqh and Hadith comprise only the categorical ordinances and Twatir type of Hadith?
- Are Witr, Sunnah and Nawafil proved from categorical Qur-anic injunction?
- What would be the fate of Fiqh (containing innumerable zanni ordinances) if kashf is rejected on this plea? Some people declare that kashf is prone to error. This argument has already been sufficiently refuted on the ground that religion as a whole is based on tradition, handed down through the generations. Since the possibility of error exists in every tradition, should we abandon the religion itself? Some argue that kashf and ilham do not constitute an authority in Shari'ah. As stated earlier, this amounts to the denial of Twatir.

To cap it all, some fools profess that an infidel can also have kashf. This is nothing but an utter delusion! How can people, for whom **ALLAH** states, *For them the gates of Heaven will not be opened,* (7:40) experience kashf, get a glimpse of Paradise and Hell, or meet the spirits of Prophets and Angels? Would an infidel, having kashf, not be able to see his ancestors being tortured in Hell and believers making merry in Paradise? Would he still remain an infidel and persist in his wrong beliefs? Remember that an infidel's belief, his conduct, his words, his heart are all benighted. Is it possible to see things in darkness? Therefore, kashf cannot be the lot of an infidel[15]. Should he claim such a thing, it is the devil's whisper; if he sees Angels (as did the infidels in the Battle of Badr) they would, of course, be the bearers of Divine punishment, not *His* reward.

Genuine and perfect faith is, of course, that of the aulia, trusted and sincere bondsmen, since it is confirmed by inner observation.

Writes Imam Rabbani, in his Maktubat (no 8, vol: II),

> The belief in the unseen, by *His* elite, is not like that of the masses. The latter acquire it through audition and reason while the former attain it by having a direct peep across the veils of Beauty and Majesty, and by piercing the curtains of *His* Splendour and manifestations. Between the elite and the masses is an intermediate class of believers, who mistake shade for Reality, splendour for the Splendid, and are content with their own observations and consider anything beyond this of no consequence.

Tafsir-e 'Azizi (p: 66) discusses this subject in these words,

> Iman (faith) is of two kinds, taqlidi (conformable or imitative) and tahqiqi (conclusive). The latter again has two categories, inferential and manifest. Each one of these is either limited or limitless. The limited is Ilm al-Yaqin (knowledge by information). The unlimited is either based on observation which is termed as 'Ain al-Yaqin (knowledge by observation), or on manifestation of Divinity which is called Haqq al-Yaqin (knowledge by conviction).

Compiler

[15] Let us first define kashf. According to sufis, kashf is the manifestation of the Realities of Divinity.

The exoterics, who are easily taken in, should take note that an infidel, toiling in hunger and thirst, gets physically weak and his blood and body fats are reduced. As a result he achieves a sort of concentration and his heart receives reflections of some material objects. This is the reality of his kashf. How can he possibly discover Realities, the conditions prevailing in Barzakh, Paradise, Hell, the Throne and the Chair?

> *Truly that is the light for which He selects any of His bondsmen He wills.* (24:35)

.... (cont'd)

Consequently, if we concede kashf to a non-believer, we shall have to concede his communion with and his inner illumination enabling him to observe *His* Realities; this would obviously render embracing the Faith as meaningless. According to Imam Ghazali (Ahya ul-'Ulum - the chapter dealing with the Armies of the Heart) kashf is a key to eternal bliss. Now if conventional kashf is conceded to a non-believer, it would mean that he holds the key to grand success. Is it conceivable? Mujaddid Alif Thani, while deliberating on the kashf of a non-believer, writes (Maktubat no. 313),

> Frequent hunger is conducive to health. For some it brings about the purification of the heart and for others, the purification of the soul. The former state enables one to attain guidance and inner illumination, while the latter leads one astray, increasing the darkness of his heart. The Greek philosophers and the yogis of India practicing hunger attain soul purification and go astray. The un-illuminated Plato, relying on his soul-purification, followed his illusions and became conceited. He failed to discern that his soul purification had not gone beyond the crust of his baser self and that his soul was still polluted and depraved. Only its bitterness had been coated with a layer of sugar.

This shows that a non-believer, with physical toil, attains a certain degree of cleanliness of the soul. But the kashf of the sufis is related to cleanliness of the heart, which is inconceivable in the case of a non-believer. Hence he cannot possibly have kashf. Maulana Ahmad 'Ali Lahori says,

> Remember, knowledge and spiritual growth are two separate issues. All spiritual afflictions have only one remedy: the company of the aulia. While in their company the blessing of **ALLAH**'s Name opens the doors of *His* favours. I must say that beneath the dust of their shoes lie hidden the pearls not found in the crowns of emperors. But this association with the aulia must be based on due decorum, devotion and obedience. One such pearl is the ability to distinguish between lawful and unlawful, and another is Kashf-e Qubur (the manifestation of the states of the dead in their graves). I call upon you, the heedless youth who deny these realities to come to me, with provisions for fourteen years. I shall entrust you to the aulia who would bring you up in a manner that you will be able (on reflection) to tell which of the graves is a grove of Paradise and which a pit of Hell.

Majlis-e Zikr part I, pp: 69-70

Evaluation of the ‘Ulama in the Light of the Qur-an

The ‘Ulama possessing knowledge of external sciences, feel justified in denying kashf and ilham while the sufis consider their denial unlawful if kashf or ilham does not conflict with Shari‘ah. As a matter of fact, a person who ignores the dictates of his kashf or ilham not in conflict with anything superior to it, (e.g. Qur-an and Hadith) does not incur any censure of Shari‘ah but is liable to suffer physical and material discomforts.

***I**n fine,* kashf and ilham do promote knowledge. It will be wrong to ignore them as do the ‘Ulama of external sciences. It has also been brought out that it is not obligatory to act upon them as held by some sufis. The truth lies in between, i.e., they are a source of knowledge and may be acted upon, but it is not obligatory to do so. The following discourse will illustrate this point,

> *Then Satan whispered to them.* (7: 20)
>
> *And when they tasted of the tree, their shame was manifested to them.* (7: 22)

.... (cont‘d)

(Majlis-e Zikr part I, pp: 69-70)

Maulana Lahori has termed Kashf-e Qubur, a type of conventional kashf, as a pearl obtainable only in the company of the aulia, through the blessing of **ALLAH**’s zikr. Obviously, a non-believer is deprived of both and hence he cannot have kashf. The Maulana also considers it an excellence, attainable by the **Grace of ALLAH,** after a long time. He invites others, in these words, to learn it from him,

> Listen and beware that **ALLAH** has blessed me with intrinsic observation and I know that the graves of young men who died while reviling the ‘Ulama have been turned into the pits of Hell. In case you doubt it, come to me and I shall teach you this skill in four years, though I learnt it myself in forty years.

Khuddam ad-Din dated 22 February 1963.

This candid and bold declaration of Maulana Lahori highlights several facts. His own excellence stands proclaimed and he offers to teach it to others in four years. In support of his claim, he is prepared to disclose the state of the dead in their graves. It is therefore amazing to hear that a non-believer can attain kashf when an accomplished saint like Maulana Lahori had to strive for forty years to acquire it. Now a word about the misunderstanding that Kashf-e Qubur is Kashf-e Kauni (pertaining to the cosmos). The basic difference is that Kashf-e Qubur does not disclose the state prevailing in the pit which constitutes the grave, but the actual condition of the one buried therein.

1) Here chastity is connected with the whisper of the devil. The latter by itself is not a sin till it leads to some sinful act, but it is derogatory to one's excellence.

2) The Divine address to Prophet Adam عليه السلام and Eve before they tasted the tree, "*...but come not near this tree...*" and "*And their Rabb called them...*" was by way of inspiration and not revelation through Jibril عليه السلام. Imam Razi explains that the said address was made through ilham to both of them individually. "There was no human being in Paradise other than Adam عليه السلام and Eve. The Divine address to Eve was by direct inspiration and not through revelation, as is evident from the wording of the said verse."

Arb'ain fi Usul id-Din p: 339.

3) Their failure to act upon their ilham subjected Adam عليه السلام and Eve to physical and worldly afflictions. It was not a punishment for breaking any religious law, though the actual wording of the Qur-an is "*Adam disobeyed...*". This disobedience is in the literal, as distinct from the legal sense, (i.e., the crime disclosed in the Qur-an that "*...their shame was manifested to them...*" is not a sin). Such an exclusive exposure between the consorts does not violate the Shar'iah. This proves that ilham is a source of knowledge and should be acted upon or else the defaulter is subjected to physical and worldly distress. It is, however, not obligatory in the eyes of Shari'ah.

.... (cont'd)

The foregoing excerpts from Maulana Lahori's writings show that those blessed with kashf can see whether the entombed is in a state of bliss or torture. It has nothing to do with cosmic affairs. Moreover, in Kashf-e Qubur the status and the achievements of the believers and the aulia in Barzakh are also disclosed.

The word 'Kaun' of which 'Kauni' is an adjective is used for everything cosmic. Kashf-e Kauni pertains to the state of things that apparently exist in the cosmos but are out of sight for the time being. Kashf-e Qubur pertains to the spiritual and the invisible world and can, by no stretch of the imagination, be taken as Kashf-e Kauni. The above analysis clearly brings out that in Kashf-e Kauni only the corporeal objects and events manifest themselves. It has nothing to do with beliefs, a field wherein it is obligatory to believe things of the Hereafter (the invisible world) e.g. the Recompense of the Grave is not a matter of the cosmos. To deny it would amount to infidelity, as stated by 'Allama Anwar Shah Kashmiri in his 'Urf-e Shuzi p: 389:

.... (cont‘d)

The Recompense of the Grave is proved by Twatir and as such has the consensus of all Sunnis. Anyone who denies this Twatir is undoubtedly a heretic and an infidel if Twatir is axiomatic. In case it is ‘posteriori’ he is the sinner of the worst kind. The Recompense of the Grave pertains to the former. Therefore, it is proved that the reward and retribution in the grave is an affair of the Hereafter and that it is obligatory to accept it as an article of Faith. This is not so in the case of worldly things like mountains, trees and animals etc.

The author of Tafsir-e Mazhari while commenting upon the meanings of the verse, *Yomenuna bil Ghaib* (Those who believe in the Unseen) vol: I, p: 19 writes:

> The Unseen means things beyond the reach of human eye e.g. **ALLAH** and *His* attributes, the Day of Resurrection, Heaven, Hell, the Pathway, the Scales, Retribution in the Grave, etc.

And Tafsir-e Qurtabi Vol. I, p: 163:

> Unseen means, things disclosed by the Prophet ﷺ which are beyond the scope of human senses, e.g, conditions of the Day of Reckoning, Retribution in graves, Resurrection, Resuscitation, the Pathway, the Scales, the Paradise and the Hell.

And according to Tafsir-e Khazan and M‘alam,

> Unseen are the things which are outside the domain of the physical eye. Ibn-e ‘Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ said that it includes everything which is ordained as an article of Faith, and is beyond the reach of human eyes e.g., Angels, the Day of Resurrection, Paradise, Hell, the Pathway and the Scales.

And Saeed ‘Aziz Dabbagh, a Ghauth of his time says,

> The non-believers cannot see the Prophet ﷺ in his tomb and the lights radiating therefrom right up to Barzakh, the spirits of the sacred saints and the believers in eternal rest in their graves, nor can they see Angels, Paradise, the Guarded Tablet, the Pen and the Divine Lights around them.

al-Abraiz Urdu, p: 559

It has been proved beyond any doubt that the Recompense of the Grave is a matter of the next world and has nothing to do with this world. Thus Kashf-e Qubur is not Kashf-e Kauni but is a part of the manifestations of Divinity. Those who treat Kashf-e Qubur as Kashf-e Kauni have doubtlessly erred but those who regard it as knowledge of the Unseen commit an enormity. Some persons, seemingly literate but lacking common sense, hold that Kashf-e Qubur is a sort of knowledge of the Unseen and that anyone who claims it is a polytheist.

My *Rabb*! What an interpretation!

Similarly Hadhrat Maryam (Mary) was addressed five times by means of ilham,

1) *And made Zakariah her guardian. Whenever Zakariah went into the sanctuary where she was, he found that she had food. He said, "O Mary! where does this (food) come from?"* (3:37)

This revelation relates to physical upbringing.

2) *And when the angels said, "O Mary, surely **ALLAH** has chosen you and made you pure, and has preferred you above (all) the women of creation."* (3:42)

This revelation is for spiritual upbringing.

3) "*O Mary, Be obedient to your Rabb, prostrate yourself and bow with those who bow (in worship)."* (3:43)

This revelation imposes religious duties on Mary.

4) *(And remember) when the Angels said, "O Mary, surely, **ALLAH** gives you glad tidings of a Word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, (Prophet 'Isa), son of Mary, illustrious in the world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near (to **ALLAH**)."* (3:45)

This revelation carries glad tidings about Prophet 'Isa

.... (cont'd)

The poor ignoramuses have neither an idea of what the knowledge of the Unseen implies, nor are they aware of the karamah of the aulia and the supernatural events. Even an ordinary scholar understands that the knowledge of the Unseen which constitutes polytheism is the one which is not amenable to reason and which is reserved for **ALLAH,** whereas kashf is an argument by itself, a symbol to prove *His* Divinity. Those who regard it as knowledge of the Unseen exhibit sheer ignorance and utter disregard of the distinction between beliefs and theories. A classical example of this imbalance is that of the author of Jawahir al-Qur-an:

1) Vol. I, p: 19. **ALLAH**'s Essence, angels, the revealed scriptures, the ancient Prophets, states of the Barzakh, indications of Dooms Day, the Resurrection and Resuscitation, the Pathway, the Scales, the Paradise, the Hell, the recompense of graves are the Commandments of the Knower of the unknown. And a denial of the facts of the unseen world, proved by the categorical Qur-anic injunction, for example retribution the grave, Resurrection, and Resuscitation etc, constitutes polytheism.

Here the learned author acknowledges that the retribution in grave is proved by categorical Qur-anic injunctions and its denial is polytheism. And now:

2) Vol. II, pp: 904-905. "The Retribution of the grave is neither to the spirit nor to the body." The question then arises, "Who is subjected to this Retribution?" The obvious answer is "No one!" On the one hand the learned author denies this reality and on the other regards its denial as an act of polytheism.

5) *Then (one) cried to her from below her, saying, "Grieve not, your Rabb has placed a rivulet beneath you. And shake the trunk of the palm tree towards you, you will cause ripe dates to fall upon you. So eat and drink and be consoled. And if you meet any mortal, say 'Surely, I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent and may not speak this date to any mortal."* (19:24-26)

This address is a consolation for Hadhrat Maryam after the birth of Prophet 'Isa, and is through an Angel, **ALLAH**'s messenger, as are the preceding three messages.

Notes: The foregoing extracts from the Qur-an prove that:

- The conversation of Angels with human beings is possible.

- Such an excellence is inherited by true followers of prophets. Those of the believers who follow Prophet Muhammad in letter and spirit, will be blessed with far greater honours.

- Whosoever surrenders to **ALLAH** attains *His* patronage.

*Will not **ALLAH** defend His slave?* (39:36). *He* protected Hadhrat Maryam and Prophet 'Isa from their enemies, provided them from *His* invisible treasures and upheld their honour. So anyone who gives himself to *Him* will attain everything. This point has been further stressed in the verse.

And will provide for him from (a quarter) where he has no expectation... (65:3)

- **ALLAH** deputes *His* chosen beings to look after *His* bondsmen. *He* deputed Prophet Zakariah, and the leader of all the Angels, Jibril, to look after Mary.

- Jibril may visit a wali but will not convey any covenant of Shari'ah, because the Faith has already been perfected.

- Mary received instructions through kashf and ilham and;

- She acted on these instructions. Undoubtedly kashf and ilham promote knowledge and may be acted on.

The Ahadith narrated in earlier chapters, depicting the glory of the aulia, i.e., "... the Prophets shall envy them on the Day of Reckoning," are confirmed by the above verses. For example, Prophet Zakariah envied Mary when he saw out-of-season fruits with her and longed for a child. The story of Prophet Musa and Hadhrat Khidhar also confirms this fact.

Probably in ancient religions of the world when the kashf or ilham of a true follower of a Prophet, clashed with the general law, it was considered an exception or a characteristic of that Shari‘ah. For example, it was an established law that no minor (may it be the child of a non-believer) should be put to death. But Hadhrat Khidhar killed a child for reasons best known to him. This was treated as an exception or a characteristic.

ALLAH knows best!

To conclude, kashf and ilham are reserved for the aulia. They are subservient to Revelation and a source of attaining celestial knowledge, though an inferior source as compared with Revelation. *In fine,* they impart knowledge, are worthy of action, but not binding in any way.

Question: Tasawwuf, kashf and ilham are related to the knowledge of Shari‘ah. How is it that some illiterate neophytes of your Order claim to have kashf and ilham? Is it possible?

Answer: This question is answered if we consider the case of the Companions. To begin with, they were first blessed with faith which by itself was an outcome of generalised knowledge. They attained the detailed knowledge of the Faith subsequently. Similarly, Tasawwuf pertains to the purification of the inner self, which is Faith itself, and which can be achieved only through devotion to and obedience of an accomplished Shaikh. A detailed knowledge is not a prerequisite. It goes without saying that purification of the inner self leads to kashf for which again knowledge is not a precondition. The knowledge of Shari‘ah is necessary only for the preservation of this Divine blessing and for further advancement. Then the knowledge of Shari‘ah is either ‘acquired’ or ‘bestowed’ as shown in the verse,

> *Is he, whose breast **ALLAH** has expanded for the surrender (to Him), so that he follows a light from his Rabb, (as he who disbelieves)? Then woe to those who hearts are hardened against zikr. Such are in plain error.* (39:22)

This proves that zikr leads to expansion of the breast for Islam (surrender to *Him)* and to the illumination of one’s inner self. The beginning and the end of Tasawwuf is nothing but zikr and it certainly bestows kashf, varying only in degree.

Knowledge is necessary for yet another reason besides preservation and perfection of kashf. The spiritual conversation is generally abridged, and comprises certain signs and signals. It takes anyone from eight to ten years to completely and correctly interpret the terminology of Barzakh.

Moreover, the knowledge of Shari‘ah is essential to attain the high offices of the Path, although the stages thereof can be reached without it. The sufi doctrine, as well as personal observations, show that the exalted and high offices of Qutb, Ghauth, Qayyum, Fard, and Qutb-e Wahdat have been confined generally, but not necessarily, to the progeny of the first four Caliphs of Islam.

In this context it should also be noted that zikr invariably endows Kashf-e Qubur. Sometimes this kashf is so sensitive that a mere thought of a tomb leads to the manifestation of everything happening inside. There are hundreds of the dead, who are considered Qutb or Ghauth, people indulge in circumambulation of their tombs, crying for their help, while the dead themselves are being subjected to terrible torture. Undoubtedly such actions destroy monotheistic belief. I happened to visit a tomb with an overhead dome, bearing a posh cover which was being kissed in homage. A spiritual look inside revealed that the entombed, securely chained and undergoing extreme torture, was pouncing like a dog. Another so-called Ghauth whose tomb is the site of a weekly fair, is in fact an infidel sadhu, buried by mistake. With the passage of time he became known as a Ghauth and an elegant structure was built over his grave, while he was under terrible punishment.

In fact, in our country the exalted honour of Ghauth has been bestowed on only a few. The first one was 'Abdul Hadi Shah of Bhera, whose grave is not known. He was followed by Hadhrat Baha ul-Haqq Zakariah Mul-tani and-'Ali Qalandar. Another one named 'Ali Hajweri (other than Data Ganj Bakhsh) is buried in the Lahore Fort but the disclosure of the exact place of his burial is strictly forbidden by him. There is yet another Ghauth in Dir State, named Hadhrat Gul Badshah. Other than the above, there has been no Ghauth in this country, though many have attained the exalted office of Qutb.

Chapter XVIII

Observing the Prophets and Angels

Observing Prophets, Angels and spirits is a subject related to kashf. Though such observations do not constitute the aim of Tasawwuf, yet these are incidental to a seeker of the Path. It has been emphasised in earlier chapters that the ultimate aim of Tasawwuf and the Path is the attainment of **ALLAH**'s Pleasure and Nearness. The reason for reiteration is that this important aspect is utterly neglected in the current thought on Tasawwuf. True Tasawwuf is nothing but love of **ALLAH** and adherence to the Prophet's Sunnah. This indeed is the 'be-all and end-all' of Tasawwuf:

The beginning of Tasawwuf is to engage in *His* worship and the end is to entrust everything to *Him* disregarding all means:

Every soul will taste death. Then to Us, you will be returned. (29:54)

Proof of Observing Prophets

There is no disagreement on seeing Prophet Muhammad and other Prophets and Angels in full consciousness. The disputed point, if at all, is whether the observation is of the real person or his image. A very small group is in favour of the latter while the majority of the 'Ulama believe in the former.

To quote a few examples:

- Imam Ibn-e Taimiyah in his Iqtada-e Sirat-e Mustaqim, supports the majority view by quoting an incident during the period of Caliph 'Umar. A man saw Prophet Muhammad who bade him to tell the Caliph to take the residents of Madinah out for Salat-e Istisqa[16] (a special prayer for invoking rain offered in the open).
- Shah Wali Ullah Dehlawi claims in these words that he learnt the Qur-an from the Prophet : "To tell the truth I am an Owaisi,[17] both in attaining inner illumination and learning the Book. I learnt the Book as well as attained inner illumination directly from the spirit of the Holy Prophet. For further details see my Fayyudh al-Haramain and Tafhimat-e Ilahiyah."

al-Faudh ul-Kabir p: 47

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[16] It was promptly granted and the people returned from the Salah completely drenched.

[17] Derived from Owais of Qarn, who during the lifetime of the Prophet drew spiritual beneficence from him without formally meeting him. -Translator

- ‘Allama Sayuti has written his Tanvir al-Halaq fi Imkan-e Ruyat an-Nabi wal Malak on the subject, which may be referred to for further details.
- Writes Imam Ghazali in his al-Munqiz mm adh-Dhalal:

  The beginning of the Path is marked by observations and manifestations so that the seekers, while awake, see the spirits of Prophets and Angels, talk to them and benefit from them.

Imam Ghazali, however, differs from other sufis in that he believes in the observation of an image and not of the person himself.

Whether Observation is of the Person or His Image

‘**A**llama ‘Abdul Wahhab Sh‘arani, disagreeing with the above opinion of Imam Ghazali, writes:

> Imam Ghazali contends that it is the image of the Prophet’s spirit which is seen and not his holy self and has drawn a simile with the vision of **ALLAH**. I do not understand the intention behind this explanation.

al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir vol: I, p: 133

He goes on to say that Shaikh Salih ‘Atiya Abnasi. Shaikh Qasim Maghrabi and Zakariah heard from ‘Allama Sayuti that he saw the Prophet more than seventy times while fully awake. Discussing this in detail, the ‘Allama writes:

> Does the observation of the Prophet mean his person or his image’? Abu Bakr bin ‘Ali ‘Arabi adjudicating on this point said that if he is seen with his own attributes, his observation will be of his person otherwise it will be of his image. This is a very fine adjudication and there can be no impediment is seeing the Holy Prophet in his person and spirit, because he and other Prophets are alive in their graves.” He recounts an incident narrated by ‘Abdullah bin Salam in these words:
>
> I went to Caliph ‘Uthman to pay my respect when his house was surrounded by the rebels. He welcomed me and confided: “I saw the Holy Prophet in this street who asked ‘Have the people besieged you and kept you thirsty?’ I replied in the affirmative. He then offered me a bucket full of water. I drank to my heart’s content and I am still feeling its cooling effect. Then the Prophet said ‘You may stay here and I will succour you or you may come and break your fast with me.’ I chose the second alternative.” The Caliph was martyred by the rebels the same day. This is a very famous incident which has been recorded in the books of Hadith with authenticity. Ibn-e Abi Asamah has also mentioned it in his Musnad and so have a few others. The fact is that the author has taken this incident to

mean that the Caliph saw the Holy Prophet while awake and not in a dream, otherwise he would not have listed it among miracles, since the vision of the Prophet in a dream is common to all believers."

al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 448-450

The Basis of Observation While Awake

The basis is provided by a Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah:

I heard the Holy Prophet saying: Whosoever sees me in his dream will also see me while awake in due course.

Fatah al-Bari m'a Bukhari vol: XII, p: 310

Sayings of Learned Saints

Shaikh Safi ud-Din in his treatise quotes Shaikh Abu 'Abbas:

Once I found myself in the presence of the Holy Prophet. I saw him writing manifestos nominating aulia, which included the name of my brother (also named) Muhammad.

Abu 'Abdullah Qarshi states:

"Enroute to Syria, I went to pay homage at the shrine of Prophet Ibrahim. I requested him to pray for the people of Egypt, as a token of my hospitality. He obliged and their distress was duly alleviated." Imam Yafa'i says that only ignorant people unacquainted with the attainments of sufis would deny this meeting of Qarshi with Prophet Ibrahim. The sufis see the portents of *His* Sovereignty in the heavens and in the earth and Prophets in their eternal life, just as Prophet Muhammad saw Prophet Musa in the Night of Ascension, first on earth and then in the heavens together with other Prophets and conversed with them."

A person requested Shaikh Abu 'Abbas al-Marsi to shake hands with him because the Shaikh had travelled widely in different parts of the world and had shaken hands with many aulia. The Shaikh replied that he had never shaken his hands with anyone other than the Holy Prophet, adding, "Should he disappear from my sight for a single moment, I shall not consider myself a Muslim."

‘**A**llama Barzi said that it was an established truth that some of his contemporary aulia as well as those gone by had seen the Prophet ﷺ while awake.

al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 442- 445

Shah ‘Abdul Haqq Dehlawi in his Ash‘at al-Lam‘at vol: 111, p: 639 writes

There are on record numerous instances (even to the extent of Twatir) of saints having seen the Holy Prophet ﷺ while they were awake.

Research by Various ‘Ulama

‘**A**llama Ibn-e Hajr Makki elaborates:

Is it possible to see the Prophet ﷺ while awake? One group denies it while another affirms it and is in the right. It comprises persons of impeccable integrity, who rely on the Hadith of al-Bukhari, “Whosoever sees me in his dream will also see me while awake in due course.” Some people hold that the observation while awake is with physical eyes, while others believe in the intrinsic observation. ‘Abdullah bin Abi Jumrah, an expositor of al-Bukhari, prefers to take the Hadith as of general application, i.e., to assign the usual meaning to the words of Hadith, and is of the opinion that the promised observation, both during and after the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, is possible only by a staunch follower of the Sunnah. He calls it misinterpretation of the Hadith to ignore the usual meaning of its words and to restrict the observation to physical or perceptive observation. He holds that no one has a right to restrict the observation when the Prophet ﷺ has not done so. And that such a person is guilty of challenging the command of the Prophet ﷺ, is ignorant of the power of **ALLAH** and does not believe in karamah of the aulia, a fact established by Hadith. By general convention the commentator implies observation while awake, which is promised by the Prophet ﷺ to a person who has seen him in a dream. This promise shall be fulfilled even if the observation in granted only once in a lifetime. Most of the promised people see the Prophet ﷺ at the time of their death- the spirit does not leave the body without seeing the Prophet ﷺ.

Above is the correct interpretation of the said Hadith of al-Bukhari. The version of al-Muslim, *Faka annahu Raani* (as if he has seen me) and *Ibn-e Maj‘ah, ‘Faqad Roani’* (truly, he has seen me), however, do lend themselves to discussion. The wording of al-Bukhari is, *‘Fasayara*’ (so he will see me in due course) means the person of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. To interpret it as, “he will see in due course an interpretation of his dream” is sheer distortion. The correct meaning is supported by the Hadith pertaining to the Night of Ascension in which

> the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw other Prophets and talked to them on matters of mutual benefit. The miracle of the Prophet ﷺ when emanating from the aulia, is called a karamah. "There is a consensus on this point that what is a miracle in case of Prophets becomes a karamah when wrought by the aulia."

Fatawa al-Hadithiah vol: II, p: 256

Said Ibn-e Kathir,

> We shall concede karamah to a claimant of wilayah only after he openly declares that he follows a particular Prophet. Where this condition is met, his karamah will be considered as a miracle of the prophet and a corroboration of his Prophethood.

Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir vol: II, p: 468

But some externalists reject karamah outright because it is beyond their comprehension. Said Imam Razi,

> Beyond this are complex and profound secrets, which cannot be endorsed by those who do not have an access to them.

Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir vol: II. p: 468

Note: The miracle of a Prophet does not constitute Prophethood by itself. It is neither a part thereof, nor a *sine quo non*, but is merely an indication and a credential. It is among the marks of excellence of Prophethood. It is inherited by true followers of a Prophet as their karamah. Kashf and observation of Prophets, Angels and spirits are various forms of this karamah.

Observation of Jinn and Satan

Is it possible to see the Jinn and Satan? According to the Qur-an we cannot see them, though they see us,

> *Lo; he (Satan) sees you, he and his tribe from where you see him not.* (7:27)

According to the Hadith, the Recompense of the Grave cannot be seen by man and the Jinn. To hold otherwise is contrary to the Book and the Hadith. Imam Shaf'ai declares that the evidence of those who claim to see the Jinn is not to be relied upon.

Observation of the Jinn - A Proven Fact

'**A**llama Khitabi has drawn on the Hadith which records that the Prophet ﷺ had once desired to confine a Jinn so as to provide fun for the boys of al-Madinah but dropped the idea in consideration of Prophet Sulaiman عليه السلام supplication. The companions of Prophet Sulaiman عليه السلام used to see the Jinn engaged in manual labour. As for the Qur-anic verse referred to above, it speaks of probabilities and covers the majority of mankind; it does not mean that the Jinn can never be seen.

'**A**llama Ibn-e Hajr writes,

> Inability to see the Jinn is not categorically proved from the said verse. It is a likelihood, because our inability is restricted to the time of their seeing us. Probably it is a general truth.

Fatah al-Bari vol: II, p: 292

Writes 'Allama Alusi in his Ruh al-Ma'ani,

> The observation of the Jinn is an exception and not a general rule. Anyone who claims to have seen the Jinn cannot, therefore, be categorised as a libertine, nor shall his testimony be invalidated particularly when there is the possibility of a karamah. The negation of observation in the Qur-anic verse under reference is a matter of general rule, not applicable to a karamah. Imam Bahaiqi in his Manaqab-e Imam Shaf'ai has listed the following assertion of the Imam : Hadhrat Rab'i says that Imam Shaf'ai declared that the testimony of a person who claims to have seen a Jinn would not be acceptable except in the case of a Prophet.

Notes:

- This assertion of Imam Shaf'ai indicates that he was speaking of observation with the physical eye. His exception of Prophets shows that the Jinn can be seen with the spiritual eye. It is an established fact that kashf falls in the category of karamah which is a branch of miracles. Observation of the Jinn by a Prophet is a miracle and by a wali, a karamah.

- From 'Allama Alusi's explanation it is evident that this observation is not possible as a general rule but only as a karamah. The same principle holds good in the case of Retribution and the Reward in the Grave. Numerous instances of Kashf-e Qubur manifested to the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions have been recorded in books of Hadith. The question is, how can a person witness the events occurring in the world of Barzakh? The answer is, it is a supernatural phenomenon, it defies description, and is incomprehensible for a layman. If you are anxious to get this observation you will have to spend at least six months with me and **ALLAH** willing, you will be able to see things for yourself.

How Sunni is Look at Extraordinary Acts

Kashf and karamah are extraordinary matters. According to the Sunni belief, a karamah is a subsidiary of a miracle, and its denial amounts to the rejection of Twatir. Those who deny it have mistaken this extraordinary act for a normal and natural act, within the reach of every human being. Since they cannot comprehend, they deny it outright, and thereby render themselves guilty of limiting the powers of **ALLAH** Almighty.

> As regards the observation of Prophets, Angels and spirits, the Sunnis believe that such an observation, unlike that of material objects, does not require physical eyes, nearness and visibility of the object to be seen and that it is rationally conceivable without these conditions. That is why **ALLAH**'s observation by his bondsmen in the Hereafter is accepted as a belief. On the contrary, the heretics believe that the observation is subjected to the aforesaid conditions.

Fatah al-Bari vol: 1, p: 347

It is obvious that only a righteous person with an enlightened heart can see the Prophet ﷺ in a dream. He shall certainly see him while awake, if groomed by an accomplished Shaikh.

> Some savants have declared that those who see the Prophet ﷺ in a dream should be given the glad tidings that they will see him manifestly while awake. It will happen when the soul is rid of carnal desires and sensual tendencies. This, of course, is the lot of the chosen aulia.

Ashat al-Lam'at vol: III, p: 640

To remove these impediments, suitable means will have to be adopted which will lead to the purification of the soul and a thorough cleansing of the heart. The means to remove them is zikr which illuminates the heart and generates a certain affinity with Angels and Prophets. Zikr in turn, imposes certain conditions on the seeker:

- He should have sound beliefs, free from heresy or apostasy.
- He should be accustomed to perform virtuous deeds.
- He should abstain from whatever is held unlawful by Shari'ah.
- He should associate with an accomplished Shaikh and follow his instructions. A look at the life of the Prophet ﷺ before his Prophethood shows that **ALLAH** had inspired his heart with animosity against idols and with the love for righteous conduct. He cherished solitude and detested evil company. When he acquired these laudable traits of character, **ALLAH** gave him what *He* wanted and bestowed Prophethood upon him, in accordance with the dictum: "The beginning is always an index of the end." According to Ibn-e Munir an expositor of al-Bukhari, the Prophet's ﷺ retirement to the cave of Mount Hira was his migration from the creation to the Creator and constituted a preamble to his Prophethood.

Fatah al-Bari vol: I, p: 7

While discussing the Qalb in Chapter IV, it has been established that perception and intellect are its exclusive faculties. But indulgence in sin renders it rusty and destroys its power of perception. This is the most dangerous ailment of the heart. The Qur-an describes it in various verses,

> *... his heart is surely sinful...* (2:283)

> *For indeed it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts, which are within bosoms, that grow blind.* (22:46)

> *... rust upon their hearts.* (83:14)

In the last verse the comparison of blindness and eyesight is in terms of inability and capability. One who had the capability to see but has lost it is known as blind. That is why walls and stones are not called blind. The Qur-anic reference to the blindness of the heart establishes that the heart has the intrinsic capability to perceive.

Objection: The verses quoted above refer to infidels, whose hearts had been so overwhelmed by the darkness of infidelity that they could not see the truth.

Answer: The effect of sinful life and infidelity in both cases is the same, i.e., the blindness of the heart. However, the causes vis-à-vis the effects can vary. The cause of blindness of an infidel's heart is the rust of infidelity, while that of the believer is the commission of sins, such as the disobedience of **ALLAH**'s commandments, immorality, disregard of Sunnah and pursuit of carnal desires. It is not necessary that a certain effect be produced by a single cause. The Prophets were the specialists in the diseases of the heart. They prescribed zikr for the restoration of its health i.e., to ensure its wholesomeness and peace. They declared that pure food for the heart lay in adherence to Shari'ah and unflinching obedience of **ALLAH**'s commandments and forbade apostasy, heresy and pursuit of carnal desires. After the Prophets, their true followers, viz, the venerable sufis and the savants deputised them. But today they are very rare.

Only the high sounding hollow claims of sainthood, shrine superiority, knowledge, excellence, sermon and preaching survive today. Shah Wali Ullah in his monumental Tafhimat-e Ilahiyah portrays the sorry state of affairs of his time in the following words, (though the conditions prevailing now are far worse):

> O superiors of shrines! You who cling to the seats of your (righteous) forefathers without a right, you have given up the way ordained by **ALLAH** through *His* Prophet ﷺ for the guidance of mankind. Instead, you regard the pursuit of your desires as the Faith and each one of you considers himself a leader and a guide on the right path, though, as a matter of fact, he has gone astray and is deluding others. We abhor those who take bai'at from the masses for mundane interests and material benefits. They are in fact extorters, robbers, liars, mischief mongers. O people! Beware of them and choose only those as your guides and leaders who invite you to follow the Book and the Sunnah.

In fine, ever since ‘The crows seized the abodes of the falcons’, the areas from where true guidance sprang forth, have become centres of absurdity, immorality, faithlessness and vagrancy. Everything, save piety and guidance can be had there. The world thrives at the expense of the Hereafter. According to Akbar **ALLAH** Abadi, religion has been turned into a business.

Imam Ghazali, in his Ahya ul-‘Ulum, addresses the externalists of his era in the following words,

> You are like a sieve, through which fine and good flour escapes leaving the bran behind.

The externalists of today, exceptions apart, are like sieves with still larger holes through which even the bran sifts down leaving utterly useless matter behind. If at times, they utter a word of wisdom, it is followed by ten foul and foolish statements polluting the whole atmosphere and making a mockery of all civility and nobility. The state of the westernised affluent society, particularly of the youth, is miserable. The works of Shakespeare and Carlyle are their Qur-an, blind emulation of Western obscenity is their Sunnah, attendance at night clubs is their Salah, humiliation of the poor and the hapless is their Jihad, Mammon-worship is their Faith and to raise the bank balance through usury and bribery is the sole object of their lives. According to the Qur-an,

> *That is the sheer loss.* (22:11)

Such being the aims, ambitions and acts of the high and low in the society, the state of their hearts should better be imagined than described. With utter mental blindness if they refuse to recognise the status of the righteous and the enlightened or reject the possibility of the observation of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they are excusable, since a blind man is not blamed when he fails to see. They are indeed lamentable, their hearts are diseased and their souls depraved. Our sincere advice to them is: Seek the treatment of a spiritual physician.

CHAPTER-XIX

SPIRITUAL BAI‘AT WITH

PROPHET MUHAMMAD ﷺ

Question: It has been stated, that after a seeker covers the initial stages of the Path in your Order, a spiritual Bai‘at is brought at the Holy Prophet's ﷺ hands. Are there any instances of similar bai‘at among the veteran sufis of the past?

Answer:

- Narrates ‘Allama Ibn-e Hajr,

  Taj Ibn-e Ata Ullah states that his accomplished Shaikh Abu ‘Abbas al-Marsi declared that he had shaken hands with the Prophet ﷺ. Says another savant, named Wafa, "I met the Holy Prophet ﷺ face to face. He embraced me and advised me to be resolute in the proclamation of **ALLAH**'s bounties."

  Fatawa al-Hadithiah vol: 2, p: 256.

- Shaikh Abu Mas‘ud said, "I shake hands with the Prophet ﷺ after every Salah."

  Ash‘at al-Lam‘at vol: 2, p: 640.

- And lastly, here is a first person account of the illustrious Shah Wali Ullah Dehlawi:

  As this sublime gnosis got embedded into my heart, the Holy Prophet ﷺ raised his head from meditation, smiling. He signaled me with both of his hands for a handshake and Bai‘at. I got up and knelt in front of him so that my knees touched his. I put my hands into his and accepted his Bai‘at. Then the Prophet ﷺ closed his eyes.

  al-Intibah fi Silsilah-e Aulia **ALLAH** p: 7.

CHAPTER- XX

SPIRITUAL OBSERVATION

The denial of spiritual conversation or Kashf-e Qubur is indeed baseless. If the subject is examined in the light of scholastic and traditional evidence, it will have to be conceded that Kashf-e Qubur is a special blessing of **ALLAH** conferred on the true followers of the Prophet ﷺ. In this context we should first establish whether spiritual conversation is supported by Shari'ah. Secondly, whether it has been mentioned in the writings of the pious precursors; and lastly, if there are any precedents in their lives providing factual proof of the matter. Should we find irrefutable evidence of these three points, a denial would then clearly amount to ignorance, obduracy and animosity:

- All the Prophets were gathered in the Bait al-Muqaddas (the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem) under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and a spiritual dialogue ensued.

  Said Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام, "Praised be the *Rabb, Who* blessed me with a grand realm, made me *His* obedient follower, protected me when I was thrown in the fire and made it cool and comfortable for me." Then Musa عليه السلام praising his *Rabb* said, "Praised be *He, Who* spoke to me in confidence, enabled me to bring about the destruction of Pharaoh, delivered the Children of Israel and raised such people from my Ummah who stuck to righteousness and guided others onto this path." Likewise said Prophet Daud عليه السلام, "Praised be the *Rabb, Who* gave me a kingdom, taught me the Zabur (Psalms), caused the iron to yield to me, subdued the mountains for me so that they, as well as the birds, hymned *His* praise along with me."

Ibn-e Kathir vol: II, p: 18

This event provides the evidence of spiritual conversation and proves that:

- a living human being can hear the conversation of the spirits as the Prophet ﷺ did, as well as;
- see those in Barzakh, and that;
- the spirits vividly remember the events of their terrestrial existence.

It should be kept in mind that these arguments are put forward to support the belief that in Bait al-Muqaddas the Prophet ﷺ conversed with the images of the previous Prophets. On the other hand, we believe that they assembled there in their physical bodies, a contention which is cogently supported by the Book and the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah**.** For details please refer to my Hayat-e Barzakhiah.

The detailed account of the Night of Ascension, recorded in al-Muslim, proves both the meeting as well as the spiritual conversation of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with a number of Prophets in Barzakh, one after the other. A recount has been avoided for the sake of brevity.

❖ The other evidence is the following saying of the Prophet ﷺ (Nasim ar-Riyadh vol: II, p: 38).

  The Prophet ﷺ said, "I see things and listen to conversation which you cannot." It is obviously a reference to the affairs of the Hereafter and the events of the celestial world. **ALLAH** manifested to the Prophet ﷺ what others cannot see, e.g., the Angels, Paradise, Hell, the Retribution in the Graves, the events of Barzakh and the cries of those undergoing punishment in their graves.

This Hadith and its explanation show that spiritual conversation is supported by the Shari'ah It also brings out that the Retribution of the Grave belongs to the unseen and according to the Qur-an, it is obligatory to believe in the unseen.

❖ Let us now examine a few observations of the pious in earlier generations,

➢ al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 291,

  The second point is that the Prophet ﷺ, in his corporeal life, has been seeing and meeting other Prophets as has just been said and that he observed Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام circumambulating the K'abah. It is a fact that the Prophet ﷺ (in his journey to Bait al-Muqaddas) saw Prophet Musa عليه السلام praying in his grave. The Hadith, that the Prophets are alive in their graves and offer prayers, is beyond any doubt. It is also true that Prophet 'Isa عليه السلام on his promised return to this world would see and meet other Prophets, particularly Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, from whom will he receive his instructions on Shari'ah.

The next point to be determined is the distinctive attributes of the virtuous who inherited this knowledge from the Prophet ﷺ. If we study their lives we find that they were all mystics of Islam. Mysticism, therefore, is the only means of inheriting such an enviable legacy. The excellence of this knowledge is praised by 'Allama Wazir in his al-Raudh al-Basim vol: II**,** p: 57,

This (the mysticism knowledge) is a fathomless sea without any shore. Its exploration without acquiring kashf is dangerous. It is like a dark night, in which movement without inner illumination is hazardous. It is an essential and axiomatic knowledge proved by continuous experiences of men of endeavour living in solitude. While awake, they observe what others see in dreams and they hear a speaker far out of sight.

❖ And now the narrations by and about these blessed personalities,

➢ al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 433

Says Shaikh ‘Abdul Qadir Jilani: I saw the Holy Prophet before Zuhr (early afternoon). He said, “My son! Why don’t you preach?” I replied, “Father! I am not an Arab and cannot speak as eloquently as the orators of Baghdad.” The Prophet bade me open my mouth and put his saliva in it seven times and then commanded that I should invite mankind to **ALLAH** with wisdom and fair exhortation. As I finished my Zuhr prayers I found a multitude of people around me. Then I saw Hadhrat ‘Ali standing by my side and repeating the Holy Prophet commandment.”

This incident has also been narrated by Imam Yafa‘i in his Kifayat al-M‘utaqid p**:** 387

➢ al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 444,

It has been recorded about Shaikh Khalifah bin Musa that he frequently saw the Prophet, both in sleep and while awake. It was said that most of his actions were governed by the Holy Prophet’s directions, received by him in dreams or wakefulness. He saw the Holy Prophet seventeen times in a single night.

➢ at-Tal‘a as-Sa‘eed by ‘Allama al-Kamal al-Asfawai.

He (‘Allama Safi Abi ‘Abdullah) was a renowned savant whose visions and karamah have been narrated by Ibn-e Daqiq and ‘Allama ‘Asqalani. They stated that he saw the Prophet and attended his audience.

➢ Kitab at-Tauhid, by Shaikh ‘Abdul Ghaffar bin Nuh.

Shaikh Abu ‘Abbas al-Marsi used to meet the Prophet, exchange salutations and converse with him.

➢ al-Manah al-Ilahiyah fi Manaqib as-Sadat al-Wafaya by Ibn-e Fa-ris.

The author says, "As a boy of five I studied the Qur-an from Shaikh Y'aqub. One day while in his company, I saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ in my absolute wakefulness. He was wearing a white cotton shirt. Then I saw myself wearing that very shirt. He commanded me to read. I read both Surat adh-Dhuha and Surat Inshirah and he went out of sight. At the age of 21, as I stood for my morning prayer at Qarafah, I found the Prophet ﷺ directly in front of me; he embraced me and said, "The bounties of your *Rabb* shall be your proclamation."

- M'ajam by Shaikh. Burhan ud-Din Baqai

The author says, quoting Imam Abul Fazal an-Nevairi, that during his visit to the Prophet's ﷺ shrine Sa'eed Nur ud-Din used to say, "Peace be on you O Prophet, and **ALLAH**'s Mercy and Blessings!" He would promptly get a reply from the sacred tomb in the presence and hearing of others, "And peace be on you O son!"

- Tabqat Ash'arani vol: I, p: 16

'Abdullah bin 'Ali Hamzah states that he often sees the Holy Prophet ﷺ and remains in his audience while awake.

- Tabqat Ash'arani vol: II, p: 75

Sa'eed Muhammad Shazli used to say, I saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requested the authentication of a Hadith, narrated in different words by Ibn-e Habban and another traditionalist. The Prophet ﷺ confirmed the genuineness of both the versions. Then a curtain drew in between, ending my observation. (He continues). I was busy teaching Fiqh to a group of students. We differed with certain logic of some of the 'Ulama. Leaving it there, I turned to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him directly if the knowledge of Fiqh was not a part of his Shari'ah. The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Yes, by all means, but due decorum and care must be exercised while refuting the arguments of the learned jurists."

- Tabqat Ash'arani vol: II, p: 88

Among them is Shams ud-Din Haji, he states he saw the Prophet ﷺ in a large tent, and the aulia entered one by one and offered their salutations.

- Tabqat Ash'arani vol: II, p: 147

Among them was Shaikh Mukhlis, who had heard the reply to his salutation during his visit to the Prophet's ﷺ shrine after performing Hajj.

- al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir vol: I, p: 9

  ‘Allama Zahbi was once asked about Shaikh Mohy ud-Din Ibn-e ‘Arabi’s claim that he wrote his book Fusus at the Prophet’s behest. ‘Allama Zahbi replied that he had no reason to doubt the veracity of a person like Shaikh ‘Arabi and this was in spite of the fact that he, like Imam Ibn-e Taimiyah was a bitter opponent of Ibn-e ‘Arabi and the sufis as a whole.

- al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir vol: I, p: 132

  Among them is ‘Allama Sayuti who states, “I saw the Holy Prophet over seventy times, while awake. One day I asked him whether I was destined to salvation. He replied in the affirmative. Then I added, ‘Will that be without any torment?’ He said that it was destined to be so. Shaikh ‘Attiya says he once asked ‘Allama Sayuti to meet Sultan Ghori to put in a word for him. He replied, “I attend the audience of the Prophet in full consciousness and his respect precludes me from going to the Sultan.”

Besides, there are numerous instances, quoted in Tabqat Ash‘arani about Shaikh ‘Allama ‘Abdullah bin Abi Jumrah, Sa‘eed Shams ud-Din Hanafi, Shaikh Mukhlis and other aulia that they had been having spiritual conversations with the Prophet while awake. Likewise al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir lists many instances of the aulia, who had been having spiritual meetings and conversations with the Prophet and benefiting from them.

- And the writings of the illustrious Shah Wali Ullah Dehlawi

- Tafhimat-e Ilahiyah vol: II, p: 249

- Spiritually, I enquired from the Prophet the meaning of a Hadith. The answer was inspired into my heart by the spirit of the Holy Prophet.

- Spiritually, I asked the Prophet about the meaning of the expression:- *Kana fi Ama.*

- Spiritually, I asked the Prophet whether I should act on the scientific theory of causation, and the answer was inspired into my heart.

- Spiritually, I enquired from the Prophet the reason of Shaikhain’s (Hadhrat Abu Bakr and Hadhrat ‘Umar) supremacy over Hadhrat ‘Ali, although he was superior in lineage, the ablest adjudicator, the bravest soldier and the fountainhead of almost all chains of sufis. The Prophet replied spiritually,

"There are two aspects of my prophethood, the outward and the inward. The outward relates to the enforcement of justice among people, their consolation and their guidance. In this, the Shaikhain constituted my right arm. The inward relates to the attainment of the various stages of Fana-o Baqa etc. the roots of which again lie in the former, viz. Shari'ah."

➢ Tafhimat-e Ilahiyah vol: II, p: 250

- Spiritually, I asked the Holy Prophet about the Shi'ites. He replied, "Their faction is fallacious as evident from the word Imam." As I pondered over this, 1 discerned that they regard the Imam as innocent and his obedience obligatory and believe that he receives secret revelations. These are the very attributes of a Prophet. Hence their belief constitutes the denial of the finality of Prophethood.

➢ Tafhimat-e Ilahiyah vol: II, p: 251

- I asked the Prophet about the best among the four Schools of Islamic Thought (Hanafi, Shaf'ai, Hanbali and Maliki) and the Four Sufi Orders and the one he liked most. It was inspired to me that all were equal and none had supremacy over the other.

In Shah Wali Ullah's book under reference, there are scores of incidents which show that he verified numerous articles of the Faith and other intellectual issues from the spirit of the Prophet, possible only through spiritual conversation.

❖ Let us now look into the still recent past:

➢ Naqsh-e Hayat-e Madni (p: 17) and Shaikh al-Islam (p: 61); when he (Maulana Madni) sits facing the Prophet's tomb he sees him in such a manner that there is no barrier whatsoever between them.

➢ Writes Maulana Rashid Ahmad Siddiqi in Shaikh al-Islam, a biography of Maulana Madni, (p: 164), "Maulana Madni sent for me and Chaudhry Muhammad Mustafa, Inspector of Schools at about 2 A.M. We hurried over. He said that the decision for the partition of India had been taken in the celestial world and that Bengal and Punjab would also be partitioned. I asked as to what we, the opponents of partition, should do. He said that we were committed to the affairs of the terrestrial world and would propagate, with full force, what we consider right."

- Writes Maulana Hussain ‘Ali in Balghat al-Hairan (p: 8), “I saw the Holy Prophet, he took me in his arms and started walking on the Pathway. I saw him writing a surety bond for me under his seal, many elders were also accompanying him. I supplicated near the K‘abah, went to the shrine of the Prophet and offered my salutations. He embraced me and gave me instructions concerning Lataif and zikr. I noticed that he was about to fall down. I lent a helping hand and saved the situation. I was sitting at the tomb of Mujaddid Alif Thani. In a spiritual conversation he told me that exposition of the doctrine of monotheism was superior to mysticism, that he had seen all the Prophets from Prophet Adam to Prophet Muhammad and that all of them loudly proclaimed, “Anyone who calls for help an absentee, save **ALLAH**, with the belief that the absentee knows him and listens to him is an infidel.”

These extracts clearly bring out the fact that spiritual conversation has the corroboration of Shari‘ah. This legacy of the Holy Prophet has already been inherited by his true followers as Divine bounty; such followers have existed in every age.

In short, it is established that spiritual conversation is a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. There are numerous examples in the lives of the Companions, omitted for the sake of brevity. The learned aulia revived this nearly extinct Sunnah of the Prophet and his Companions and, according to the Prophet, are entitled to the glorious and well merited reward of a hundred martyrs. On the other hand those who deny it, in fact, disown the Prophet’s Sunnah and the practice and dignity of the Companions and thousands of aulia. The loss is entirely theirs because a cynical attitude in this matter is likely to endanger their ultimate salvation.

As for the authenticity of these statements, here is the gist of Maulana ‘Abdul Hayee Lacknavi’s research:

> These narrators are very reliable and their writings should serve as an authority; indeed, they are the pioneers of Islam and guides for the common people. They are consulted in all important matters, their verdicts being final and irrefutable, (e. g. Abu Na‘eem, Ibn-e Kathir, Samani, Ibn-e Hajr Makki, Ibn-e Hajr ‘Asqalani, ‘Allama Sayuti, Mullah ‘Ali Qari, Shams ul-‘Ulama Kurdi, ‘Abdul Wahhab Sha‘arni and Imam Zahbi). Do you think that these holy men have introduced falsehood in their works of research or depended upon the narrations of liars? By **ALLAH** this is inconceivable! They are Imams, highly conscientious and trustworthy, whatever they write cannot be questioned. Should you harbour any doubts turn to Tabqat Ash‘arani, which will convince you of their veracity and truthfulness. A layman can go wrong, but not these trusted savants of Islam, for they were blessed with Angelic traits which enabled them to attain these celestial attributes. Anyone who rejects them in fact rejects karamah. As for the wayward, the ignoramus, nothing would benefit him. Anyone who harbours doubt in this regard is indeed a bigot, who must not only be ignored but also condemned.

‘Allama Sayuti has also expressed a similar view with reference to Ibn-e Abi Jumrah (al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 439).

> lbn-e Abi Jumrah says, “A denier of this (spiritual conversation) either believes in the karamah of aulia or rejects them. In case he rejects them it is futile to discuss anything with him, because he is contradicting a fact cogently proved from the Sunnah. If he believes in karamah he must also believe in spiritual conversation, which itself is a type of karamah. Numerous events of the terrestrial, as well as the celestial world, are manifested to the aulia by way of karamah.”

Again at p: 102,

> If such a doubt is entertained then the relevant historical records and the Cyclopedia of Narrators of Tradition can no longer be relied upon, because such incidents of spiritual conversation have been recorded therein.

And in ar-Raf‘a wa at-Takmil p: 64,

> Should anyone feel that these great savants have agreed on false notions, he has undoubtedly committed a big blunder. If they are not relied upon, a dead-lock will occur on many issues. I have no doubt that anyone indulging in their falsification is himself a great liar.

In fine, the denial of Kashf-e Qubur and spiritual conversation is utter ignorance. Anyone doing so, is unworthy of intellectual discourse.

Why this Divine bounty is bestowed on a selected few is yet another important aspect of this discussion. Hafiz Ibn-e Qayyum, in his Kitab ar-Ruh provides the raison’ d‘etre,

❖ p: 81

➢ **ALLAH** discloses the Retribution of the Graves to such of *His* bondsmen as *He* wills and conceals it from others. Because if this truth be manifested to everyone, belief in the unseen would become meaningless and people would stop burying their dead, as the Prophet ﷺ is reported to have remarked, “Lest you stop burying your dead, I would have supplicated to **ALLAH** to enable you to perceive the Retribution of the Grave as I do.”

➢ **ALLAH**’s majesty is still greater and far more marvellous. *He* has, in this world, manifested to us great signs of *His* Omnipotence, mightier than this one (Retribution of the Grave). But human beings are prone to deny what they cannot comprehend, save those protected by *Him,* only the agnostics and the hypocrite falsify the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

❖ p: 82

➢ Seeing Hell-fire in the grave is just like seeing Angels and the Jinn. **ALLAH** shows it to whomsoever *He* wills.

‘**A**llama Ibn-e Hajr ‘Asqalani observes in his Fatah al-Bari vol: III, p: I 152,

> And it is obvious that **ALLAH** withheld the observation of these Realities from the masses lest they stop burying the dead. Physical organs are unable to observe the affairs of celestial world.

Notes:

➢ **ALLAH** manifests the Recompense of the Grave to *His* chosen bondsmen.

➢ Had every believer been given this capability, the belief in the unseen would have become redundant and people would stop burying their dead.

➢ The Recompense of the Grave is a matter of the celestial and not the terrestrial world. Therefore, Kashf-e Qubur is not Kashf-e Kauni and those, who hold otherwise, are wrong.

➢ Kashf-e Qubur, viz, the observation of the dead in the grave, and their reward or retribution is similar to seeing Angels and the Jinn because subtle existence is common to both.

➢ The Recompense of the Grave being a matter of the celestial world, can neither be seen nor heard with physical organs but through the eyes and ears of the heart, granted to the aulia. That is why Kashf-e Qubur and spiritual conversation is the lot of the chosen few.

➢ It is only the agnostics, hypocrites and liars who do not believe in Kashf-e Qubur and the ability to see Angels.

Enough has been said about the aulia meeting, embracing, conversing with and benefiting from the Holy Prophetﷺ. The final verdict in the matter has been given by ‘**A**llama Sayuti in his al-Hawi vol: 11, p: 453-460,

> Here is the gist of all these Ahadith and narrations. The Prophetﷺ is alive, body and soul together. He can go to any part of this globe or the celestial world and exert influence at his sweet will, just as he did in his earthly existence. He is alive in the same form in Barzakh as before without undergoing any change. He is not visible just as the Angels, though alive, are not visible. When and for whom **ALLAH** wills, the curtain rises and the Prophetﷺ becomes fully visible. Such an observation is not of an image in the world of imagination. It is thus clear that

> those gifted with spiritual insight and enlightenment, see the Holy Prophet and converse with him. The Companions of the Prophet were the leaders of these blessed souls.

This brings to light the following realities,

- The Prophet is alive, body and soul together.
- This existence is hidden from the masses, just like that of the angels.
- When **ALLAH** wills that a particular bondsman of *His* should see him, the curtain is lifted.
- This observation of the Prophet is not that of a model or an image.

Above is the sum total of all events, recounted from Ahadith, the savants and the aulia, recorded in various books that we could acquire.

Nevertheless, these facts are contested for reasons, recorded by Syed Muhammad Hurai Bayuni, in his Kitab ar-Ruh wa ma Haito-ha p: 46,

> People who deny these karamah, do so because they are leading delinquent lives and are overwhelmed by secular attachments. It is impossible for them to learn the secrets of the aulia. Most deplorable among them are the outrageous ‘Ulama, votaries of Mammon, who, out of sheer lust for temporal gains, bow down at the doors of rulers and the wealthy. With their souls thoroughly polluted, they seek in vain, an access to these realities and when they fail to do so, they deny the very karamah of the aulia. Consequently most of them are a source of wickedness and a nuisance, not only to themselves, but also to others. They are like the Children of Israel who, though believing in the institution of Prophethood, denied their Prophets out of sheer malice and animosity.

May **ALLAH** protect us!

Writes Hadhrat Shazli in his Tabqat Ash‘arani vol: II, p: 75:

> I saw the Prophet. He told me “I am not dead. The nature of my death is that I am hidden from the person who is not blessed with spiritual perception. As for those spiritually illuminated, we see each other.”

Tafsir-e Jamal vol: IV, p: 61

> Qartabi says that the final word, clarifying all doubts comes from some of the elders. The death of Prophets and martyrs is not in its literal sense, because they are alive, though we cannot see them.

Kitab ar-Ruh p: 43

Ibn-e Qayyam said, “The death of Prophets means that they are hidden from us. We cannot see them though they are present and alive. Their existence is similar to that of the Angels, who are alive and present but not visible to us.”

And last, but not least, is the assertion of the author of Ruh al-Ma‘ani . Deliberating on the karamah of the aulia, he writes (vol: XXIII, p: 13),

> This is well known among great sufis and is true. Anyone who denies it does so out of self-conceit and only an ignorant, hostile and obdurate person will commit such a blunder.

On the other hand, there are ‘Ulama who, in spite of a difference of opinion, are thoroughly impartial. Here is an example, which should wind up the discussion.

> On 26, November 1971 (8 Shawwal 1391 A. II.), Shams ud-Din arrived in Chakrala (the author’s home town). He addressed the Friday congregation soon after Salah, in the Ghazi Khail mosque, hundreds of people, both for and against were present. He had come on the invitation of ‘Abdullah and Maulvi Sulaiman. The latter placed before him a copy of our Israr al-Harmain[18] to induce the learned speaker to criticise its contents and support his belief in the negation of karamah of the aulia. The speaker on the other hand, approved the theme of the book. He pointed out an error in expression, namely that the Arabic word *Shakit* should in fact be *Shakut* in the spiritual dialogue with Hadhrat Fatimah رضي الله عنها. He added that he was not sure whether the learned author mistook this word of her spiritual conversation or it was a formatting error. Emphasising that he had no reason to doubt, he narrated one of his personal experiences in support of the contents of the book thus...

[18] (Secrets of the Holy Land). The book contains a record of spiritual conversation of the author during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1971. - Translator

> I was in the company of Maulana Hussain ‘Ali, along with Muhammad Tahir Panjpiri and another person. Meanwhile his (Maulana ‘Ali’s) cook, Nur Muhammad Kashmiri entered weeping, with a letter in his hand. On enquiry, the servant stated that his mother had died. The Maulana closed his eyes for a while and told him that he had been misinformed and that his mother was alive, sweeping her courtyard right then. He forbade him from disclosing this observation to anyone during his (Maulana’s) life time. The servant went home and found the kashf of the Maulana absolutely true.

Shams ud-Din regretfully recalled that he had been visiting Maulana Hussain ‘Ali for a period of 24 years to attain this skill but without success. He added that it would be foolish on his part to ignore or deny a Divine blessing which, unfortunately, he had been unable to achieve. He said if he had time, he could quote many instances from the books on the attainments of the sufis in the Path but they should personally refrain from publicising their achievements. Maulvi Sulaiman pointed out that the sufis did not do so. The learned speaker retorted that there were certain stages in the Path wherein publicity did no harm.

CHAPTER-XXI

SOME OBJECTIONS

AND

THEIR ANSWERS

First Objection: Tasawwuf is a heresy.

Answer: The human being is a strange combination of paradoxes. He has instituted separate air tight compartments for different walks of life and spelled out principles to solve the problems of each. Not only that, these principles vary in each case but are also diametrically opposed to each other. Take the example of health**:** in the case of sickness, he consults the best physician because a quack is considered dangerous, nor is self treatment resorted to because it involves risk of one's dear life. Another example is his legal affairs, here the opinion of a veteran jurist is taken as the final word- these certainly are fine principles. But in the matter of religion and faith, he poses as an expert and passes verdicts at will; the irony is that every absurdity is considered an authority and the final word. Such an attitude has created strange complications in religious matters. Consequently, Tasawwuf has been dubbed as a heresy by such self-styled experts.

A whole chapter has been devoted in this book for proofs of Tasawwuf, which is adequate for a detailed study and analysis. Those who wish to acquire further knowledge, and are learned enough, should consult the relevant chapters of Fatah al-Bari, lqtadha-e Sirat-e Mustaqim, al-I'atesam and Fatah al-Mulhim. Indeed, defining Tasawwuf as a heresy stems from the lack of understanding of the Faith as a whole. Those who give such irresponsible verdicts are likely to err in a greater way if they are on the wrong track themselves. It is an established tact that the text of a constitution does not explain all its detail, only broad principles and the formulae are outlined. The Qur-an, being the fountainhead of the Islamic constitution, contains only the broad principles of the Faith, interpreted in minutest detail by the practice of the Prophet ﷺ. Again, the method of deducing details from these fundamental principles has also been indicated by him. The true erudite among his followers, who are his rightful heirs, continue to deduce and issue ordinances to meet the demands of the time, in accordance with the method laid down by him.

The principles and the formulae being the objectives, the exploration and adoption of means and methods to achieve these objectives cannot be termed an affront to the Faith. Such means will, of course, become heresy when accepted as part of, or the Faith itself, because in that case they shall fall in the category of objectives. Means (after all) are means, used as such to achieve an end.

To illustrate this point, let us examine the Divine Command, "O *Messenger! Make known that which has been revealed to you.*" and the Hadith, "Preach what you learn from me, may it be only a verse," each ordains preaching which is the objective, but the method to achieve it, is not indicated. It may be conducted by a word of mouth, using the pulpit or the chair, in a Masjid, out in the open, while travelling in a train or a bus or even by means of a loud speaker. All these are means and since these are adopted for the propagation of the Faith, they become its preface.

An example may be quoted of yet another commandment,

*O you who believe, remember **ALLAH** with much remembrance.* (33:41)

Now, to remember **ALLAH** individually, or collectively, in a seance, by word of mouth or within the heart spiritually, moving, sitting, reclining, keeping count on fingers or on a rosary, etc, are all means, the objective being the remembrance. To term all these as heresy obviously amounts to impeding the attainment of the objective.

I personally pursue the Deobandi line (teachings of the most eminent Muslim institution at Deoband, now in India). I neither live on gifts and charity, nor hold periodical festivals on tombs, nor do I covet others' riches - all this is against my creed. My way is simple and crystal clear, I hold the Qur-an in my right hand, Sunnah in the left and follow the footsteps of our righteous forefathers and that is all. I trust kashf only when it is in conformity with Qur-an and Hadith, otherwise I reject it as a whisper of the Devil. The Sufi Order that I pursue is the Naqshbandiah Owaisiah which allows beneficence to be drawn from the spirit, though not of the type implied by the ignoramus. The method used by me for this purpose has been described in an earlier chapter, though incomprehensible for the beginner.

I do not favour the concept of Tasawwur-e Shaikh (a meditation in which the personality of the Shaikh is contemplated). There is no room for this concept in our Order. For the oral invocations I hold recitation of the Qur-an foremost, followed by Istighfar (supplication for *His* Forgiveness) and Darud Sharif.

In the Halqah-e Zikr, the invocation used is "**ALLAH** Hu" **(ALLAH** exists). At each stage, verses from the Qur-an are recited. In the spiritual stroll of the K'abah and the audience of the Prophet ﷺ, *Labbaik* (O *Rabbi* I am present) and Darud Sharif are recited respectively. In all other stages of the Path, nothing but the name of **ALLAH** is commemorated.

The assembly of seekers for spiritual attention, zikr by breathing method, etc, is not the objective but only the means for its achievement. Neither forming Halqah, nor Tawajjuh nor breathing through the nose is religion, but only a preface to it. In the Order I pursue, there is no room whatsoever for hymns or invocations not permitted by the Sunnah. I challenge the critic to point out one iota of heresy in our Order. We follow the explicit teachings of the Book and the Sunnah, which provide a beacon, a fountainhead, and the only yardstick for guidance, and that is all!

Second Objection: Disclosing kashf and ilham to others is not permissible.

Answer: It has been wrongly presumed that matters relating to kashf should not be disclosed. Muslim masses apart, some of the 'Ulama consider such expression unlawful and criticise it. The fact is that the manifestation of the knowledge of the Path is essential for three distinct reasons:

- **ALLAH**'s blessings must be proclaimed as a token of gratitude.
- As an important branch of religion, it must be propagated as a matter of obligation.
- Denial of a fact makes its disclosure necessary. In this case, the denial of kashf has crossed all limits, almost to the extent of rejecting a fundamental branch of the religion.

Proclaiming ALLAH's Bounties and Expounding the Faith

Disclosure and proclamation of *His* bounties and blessings is essential being clearly enjoined by the Qur-an: *Therefore the bounties of your Rabb be your discourse.* The author of Tafsir-e Mazhari writes in the explanation of this verse, "No fuss should be created by anyone on the discourse of *His* bounties by the sufis." According to Irshad at-Talibin, "Whoever denies the discourses of the sufis in fact denies the Qur-anic injunction." 'Umar bin Sho'aib in al-Mishkat vol: II, 'Chapter on Raiments' quotes the Prophet ﷺ:

> **ALLAH** likes *His* bounties to be proclaimed by *His* bondsmen.

According to Asha‘t al-Lam‘at (an explanation of al-Mishkat vol: III, p-548),

> The concealment of a Divine bounty is not permissible because it amounts to ingratitude. Likewise any blessing on *His* bondsmen such as knowledge and allied matters relating to its perfection (inward or outward) must be manifested. This will keep the people posted and enable them to benefit from it. Such a disclosure will, of course, be in accord with the Qur-anic pronouncement,
>
> *Spend of that We have bestowed upon them.* (2:3)

Note: The expression of spiritual achievements is permissible for the benefit of mankind while concealment is unlawful. One who conceals will be punished, intention being the key note.

Tafsir-e Jamal (vol: II, p: 445) further explains the point:

> That is why it is incumbent on a person living in seclusion to declare himself so that he could be recognised and benefited from. An expression of his attainments for this purpose shall not amount to pride or self-conceit.

Writes Ibn-e Kathir in his commentary Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir (vol: II, p: 482) while explaining the verse:

> *He (Yusuf) said, “Set me over the store houses of the land. Surely! I am a skilled custodian.”* (12:55)
>
> This apparently is a self-praise on the part of Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام but it not at all so, because a disclosure likely to benefit mankind is permissible and meritorious.

Tafsir-e Jamal elucidates,

> If anyone declares his excellence for the benefit of the people, it is neither repugnant nor unlawful, rather incumbent. For example, a person possessing knowledge of public utility unknown to the people must disclose it as a matter of moral obligation.

Disclosure Conditional

Anyone who takes undue pride in the expression of his attainments or intends to draw benefit forbidden by Shari‘ah will stand guilty of perfidy, self-conceit and pride.

Hafiz Ibn-e Kathir spells out a principle in his Exegesis (vol: III, p: 548),

> A Divine favour is to be concealed up to a point, i.e., till it fully manifests itself. According to Hadith, "Help your needs by concealing them until their fulfilment, for every recipient of *His* blessings is generally begrudged."

Notes:

- When a Divine favour is in the offering and the recipient is informed through kashf or ilham it should not be disclosed till its realisation, lest it is stopped.
- The more a person is blessed, the more begrudged will he be.
- The secrets between **ALLAH** and *His* aulia which are not of public benefit and which might mislead the uninitiated, should not be disclosed. Is it not a privilege to be the bearer of *His* secrets?

However, the fact is that an excellence, of whatever nature and quality, ultimately manifests itself.

Had there been no manifestation and expression of true sufi knowledge, there would have been no distinction between right and wrong, the righteous and the depraved, and mankind would have remained ignorant of true Islamic mysticism. Without this knowledge the common man misguided by his ignorance would take any lunatic for a wali and a pseudo sufi for a Qutb!

Third Objection: When the hearing by the dead is not possible, how can a communication be established with them'?

Answer: To begin with, let us be clear about a basic principle.

At the time of death, the Ruh is not divested of its achievements and knowledge acquired during its association with the body. These rather stand amplified resulting in wider cognition. However, it is unable to act through physical instrumentation. In the earthly existence, it relies on physical ears, eyes and tongue because it has to deal with corporeal things. When it finally departs from the body, its physical senses are divested but it retains the inherent attributes of speech, hearing and sight. Therefore, the Ruh lives, speaks, sees, hears and answers when spoken to.

There is a consensus on this issue. Imam Ghazali, in his Ahya ul-'Ulum (p: 15) sums it up in these words,

- The Qalb of the believer does not taste death. It is neither divested of its knowledge nor is its purity disturbed.
- Secondly, the hearing by the dead is the domain of kashf. Therefore, only those who are blessed with it have the right to discuss the issue, as explained in Kashf al-Astar glosses of Durr-e Mukhtar.
- Beware that hearing by the dead is not such an ordinary issue as to be within the purview of literalists and narrators. On the other hand, it is related to inner manifestation, bestowed by **ALLAH** on some of *His* aulia.

Note: This does not imply that kashf is something final and conclusive. Indeed, it is a definite authority for the endowed one but only to the extent of conformity with the categorical laws of Shari'ah.

Ruh Retains its Memory and Knowledge after Death

> *It was said (to him), "Enter Paradise." He said, "Would that my people knew, with what (munificence) My Rabb has pardoned me and made me of the honoured ones."* (36:26-27)

Note: This shows that the treatment meted out to the believer (referred in the above verse) by his community was retained in his memory (even after he was done to death). His words express his grief.

The Ruh Hears

> *And when Ibrahim said (to his Rabb), "My Rabb! Show me how You give life to the dead." He said, "Don't you believe?"" Ibrahim said, "Yes, but (I ask) in order that my heart may be at ease." (His Rabb) said, "Take four of the birds and cause them to incline to you, then place a part of them on each hill, then call them, they will come to you in haste..."* (2:260)

Rebutting the belief of the non-conformists, Imam Razi explains,

> This verse bears ample testimony to the fact that every part of the birds heard the call of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام, understood it and having been restored to formal existence by **ALLAH**, flew back to him, notwithstanding the fact that their parts were scattered away on different hills. It provides incontrovertible evidence that the body need not be intact before animation.

This verse is explicit in its meaning. There is no difference of opinion about hearing by the Ruh. The point at issue is whether the physical body hears or not. The return of the Ruh to the body at the time of questioning by the Angels (Munkir and Makir) is proved

from Twatir. The disagreement is confined only to whether or not the body continues to hear after this interview.

The Return of the Ruh on the Eve of the Interview

> Shaikh al-Islam said that the return of the Ruh to the body at the time of questioning is supported by authentic Hadith to the extent of Twatir. But a certain group opposes this Twatir who, in turn, are opposed by a consensus of the ‘Ulama.

Kitab ar-Ruh p: 62

‘**A**llama Sayuti quotes Imam Ibn-e Taimiyah,

> The Hadith pertaining to the return of the Ruh to the body at the time of questioning are authentic and continuous. A section of critics like Ibn al-Zaghuni, lbn-e Jorair (and Karamiah) oppose this but the consensus of the ‘Ulama is against them.

Sharah as-Sudur fi Ahwal al-Mauta wal-Qubur (p:60)

‘**A**llama Salfi said,

> The return of the Ruh to the body in the grave is a proven fact. This covers all the dead without exception and is the true belief. The difference of opinion is confined only to the Ruh’s permanent presence with the body in the grave.
>
> Shaikh al-Islam, ‘Allama lbn-e Hajr was asked whether the questioning of the dead takes place (after the Ruh returns to the body) lying or sitting, he confirmed the latter. He was again asked whether the Ruh re-establishes its link with the entire body as before. He nodded in affirmation and added that according to a number of Hadith only the upper part of the body is restored to full life... and that this re-established connection of the Ruh stays on forever, even if the body is shredded into bits and pieces.

Sharah as-Sudur fi Ahwal al-Mauta wal-Qubur (pp:60,97)

Note: The connection of the Ruh is re-established with the body at the time of questioning in the grave, though confined to the upper half because of the location of the Qalb, the faculty of perception.

The Connection of the Ruh with the Bodies of Prophets is Permanent in their Graves

> Then Abu Bakr came, uncovered the Prophet's countenance, kissed it and said, "I totally devote myself to you. You remained pure during your life and thereafter. I swear by the *Rabb* who controls my very life that you will not die again."

Fatah al-Bari (vol: VII, p:20)

The author further asserts that the Holy Prophet lives eternally in his shrine and that all the Prophets are similarly alive.

Note: The re-established connection of the Ruh for the purpose of questioning in the grave stays permanently in case of the Prophets it is never severed, because of this they live and pray in their tombs. This is the belief of all Sunnis.

Both the Body and the Ruh are Subjected to Punishment

- The consensus of the Ummah is that both the body and the Ruh share Recompense of the Grave.

Tafsir-e Mazhari vol: VIII, p: 77

- And numerous Ahadith confirm this and all pious precursors are unanimous on it.

Tafsir-e Mazhari vol: X, p: 77

- The entombed lives and is subjected to punishment. This is the belief of all Sunnis.

Hashiah-e Khyali p: 118

- The animation of the dead buried in the graves, their questioning by the Angels and the infliction of punishment of infidels and transgressors are unquestionable and irrefutable facts upheld by all the righteous of old.

Sharah Mowaqif p: 715

Note: Life is a pre-requisite for recompense and is inconceivable without the Ruh. This necessitates its return, a fact proved from Twatir. Then there is the consensus of the Ummah on reward and punishment being meted out to both the body and the Ruh together and this is the belief of all Sunnis.

Consensus of the Ummah on Hearing by the Dead

The Prophet ﷺ enjoined his followers to invoke peace whenever they happen to pass by a cemetery in these words, “Peace be on you! O dwellers of the believers’ abode.” This (the invoking of peace) is for one who hears and understands. Otherwise, it would mean addressing the nonexistent and the stones, which is obviously absurd. All of the righteous from bygone days agree on the hearing by the dead. It is proved from Twatir that the entombed recognises the visitor and rejoices at the homage being paid. Ibn-e Kathir adds, “This address naturally is for one who hears, understands, and reciprocates, whether or not the visitor discerns it.”

Note: This also proves that the grave is the very pit in which the dead is buried. The punishment is meted out here. The dead body is lying in this pit though it is a part of Barzakh. The similitude is that of a human being living in the world but having his abode at a particular place. Likewise, the dead are in Barzakh, in a particular place, i.e, the grave in which they are buried.

Question: If the grave is taken to mean this pit on the earth and not Barzakh, a number of Hadith shall stand nullified. For example, the dead eaten by carnivorous animals, drowned in water, or burnt away, have no such graves. Therefore, the meaning assigned to the grave should cover all these eventualities. The Prophet ﷺ during his Ascension found some persons undergoing punishment though they were not in their graves.

Answer: Writes ‘Allama Ibn-e Hajr,

> The punishment is ascribed to the grave in general terms because it is often meted out there and because, by and large, there the dead are entombed.

Note: This shows that interment is the general method, other forms being exceptions, and as such, not infringing the general principle.

About drowning, the Qur-an relates the episode of Pharaoh’s army (pursuing the Children of Israel):

> *They were drowned and then thrown into the fire.* (71:25)

This means, in no uncertain terms, that no matter where the fragments of the body may be, the connection of the Ruh will be re-established for the purpose of recompense.

About burning, an incident has been related in al-Bukhari, the most authentic work on Hadith. A person left a will enjoining his sons to burn his corpse, throw some of the ashes into water and scatter the rest in the wind. **ALLAH** commanded them together, restored him to life and questioned him. This indicates that the Ruh returns to the body at the time of questioning. Of course the Ruh of said person was living. The animation of the body from ashes indicates the re-establishment of the connection of the Ruh with the body.

About the Prophet's ﷺ observation of the Ruh in punishment without the body, during his Ascension, it has already been proved that the punishment is executed on both the body and the Ruh together. The connection of the Ruh with the body sustains irrespective of the latter's location. Observation of the Ruh under torture in Barzakh, during the Ascension, does not in any way negate the chastisement of the body. It must be clearly understood that in case the body was not to be subjected to punishment, the Ruh would not have been restored to it because the Ruh could independently be subjected to punishment irrespective of the body's location, it follows then that the grave means this very pit. Otherwise the return of the Ruh to the body would be meaningless, i.e., the Ruh being already in Barzakh, the proposition of its reunion with the body would be incorrect.

Question: In the two verses, *Surely, you can not make the dead to hear...* and... *you can not reach those who are in the graves..,* the infidels have been compared-with the real dead, who indeed are so. The non-hearing is definitely proved in their case.

Answer:

- *Cannot make hear...* is not in the literal but allegorical sense. As a rule, the comparison is drawn by expressing the predominant common quality. For example, in an allegory like, "Zaid is a tiger", Zaid is called a tiger due to their predominant common quality, i.e., courage. Similarly the comparison of the infidels with the dead is not drawn by way of death, because it is not common to both. They were, of course, living and the comparison was in the quality of hearing, which was common to both. But the hearing again is not meant in the literal sense because the infidels did possess ears and could hear very well. Here, the literal meaning is conditional, i.e., beneficial hearing, the condition is that of benefit. Therefore, the verse under reference enunciates that the dead do not benefit from the preaching of the Prophets just like the infidels because they are dead of hearts (their hearts do not perceive). This proves that, here, beneficial hearing is denied and not the literal. It is this beneficial attribute which is common to both, the infidel and the dead.

Some argue that here the denial is that of *asm'*a (making to hear) and not *of sam'a* (hearing). On this basis some so-called modern commentators of the Book (who indeed are its interpolators) have, in their misguided enthusiasm, surpassed the People of the Scripture and other transposers. Their argument cannot stand the test of searching analysis.

- Human actions fall into two categories; namely, natural and supernatural. The latter even if intentional, are not attributed to human beings but to the Almighty. The verse under reference implies this meaning. Here **ALLAH** addresses *His* Prophet ﷺ, *You cannot make them hear (but I can)*. Other examples:

> *So you (Muhammad) did not slay them, but it was **ALLAH** Who slew them...* (8:17)

> *Surely **ALLAH** makes whom He wills to hear...* (35:22)

Similarly, the spiritual conversation of the aulia with those in Barzakh is a supernatural act, as distinct from a natural one.

Question: A person vows that he would neither talk to Zaid, nor clothe him, nor beat him. If any of these actions is taken by him after Zaid is dead, it would not amount to the violation of his vow. This is because Zaid, when dead, has no senses, does not hear, and the beating causes him no pain.

Answer: The basis of an oath is on common law. Accordingly, actions like speaking, beating, etc, pertain to this existing life. After Zaid's death, his legacy is distributed among his heirs and his wife remarries. If he is restored to life by the miracle of a Prophet or the karamah of a wali, he would neither recover his property, nor his wife because these were the possessions of his original life. Likewise, an infidel's confession of faith, if restored to life, after his death, will not be valid because this matter necessarily concerns the former life. Similarly, the vow in question pertains to the life-time of Zaid. To deduce from it that the dead neither hears nor feels pain is a folly, and to attribute such a deduction to the four Imams is an awful calumny:

> The noble Imams (Abu Hanifah, d. 150 A.H.; Malik, d. 195 A.H.; Shaf'ai, d. 204 A.H.; and Ahmad bin Hanbal, d. 264 A.H) stand free from any insinuations on this account. Their verdict is that beating of the dead or speaking to him, etc, is not admissible because the basis of an oath is on common law which is the deciding factor in this case, it pertains to the terrestrial existence and not to the celestial. Speaking to the dead, though a reality because they hear and understand, yet a vow like, "I shall not speak to him," being a matter of common law, necessarily pertains to this earthly existence. Similar is the case with pain, which even if felt, common law dictates that a vow like, "I shall not beat him," holds good during his lifetime and not after death.
>
> Sharah Waqayah Glosses by Maulana 'Abdul Haqq p: 254.

Question: Why did Caliph 'Umar رضي الله عنه and Hadhrat 'Aishah رضي الله عنها deny hearing by the dead?

Answer: First let us analyse the narration on which the denial of Caliph 'Umar رضي الله عنه is based,

> After a victory the Prophet ﷺ usually stayed in the battle field for three days. On the third day after the Battle of Badr, he ordered his mount and proceeded to the well wherein the corpses of the enemy killed in action were collected. He stood by the well and addressed them by their names. Caliph 'Umar رضي الله عنه standing by asked, "O! **ALLAH**'s Messenger, How do you address the bodies without souls?" The Prophet ﷺ answered, "I swear by the *Being Who* controls my life, you cannot hear better than them."

al-Mishkat p: 345

Note: This clearly indicates that the question asked by Caliph 'Umar was to seek a verdict and did not amounted to a denial. After Prophet's categorical assertion quoted above, can it be rationally argued that a Companion of 'Umar's calibre shall deny hearing by the dead? Denial apart, even amazement cannot be presumed. Caliph 'Umar's question seems to stem from the fact that three days had passed on the dead, the interview by the Angels concerned (Munkir and Nakir) was over but the dead still continued to hear. The point is illustrated further by another similar incident.

According to Abu Hurairah, a swarthy woman used to sweep the Prophet's mosque. Not finding her there one day, the Prophet enquired about her and was told that she had died.

'**A**bdullah Ibn-e Marzuq narrates the subsequent part.

> The Prophet passed by a grave and was told that it was of Umm-e Mahjan, the said woman. We all lined up and offered the funeral prayer. The Prophet addressing her enquired, "Which one of your deeds stood you best?" The Companions enquired whether she was listening and were told that they were not hearing any better. The woman answered, 'Sweeping of the mosque was by far my best deed.'

at-Targhib vol: I, pp: 196-197

Note: These two Hadith prove continuous hearing by the dead, if **ALLAH** wills. The Prophet conversed with Umm-e Mahjan some days after her death. This shows that those who confine the hearing only to the time of questioning by the Angels, soon after burial, are wrong.

The versions of al-Mishkat and at-Targhib prove from the Prophet hearing by the dead after three days in one case and after a number of days in the other. This is the true story of the denial remorselessly attributed to Caliph 'Umar.

As for the denial ascribed to Hadhrat 'Aishah, let us examine one of her own statements. She quotes the Prophet,

> Anyone who visits the grave of a fellow Muslim and sits by it, the dead cultivates affection with him and answers his salutation.

Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir vol: III, p: 347 and Kitab ar-Ruh p: 5

This Hadith is clear on hearing by the dead. Yet the adamant categorise it as feeble despite the presence of other corroborating Hadith, a fact which provides strength of authenticity even to a feeble one, for example:

- It has been narrated with reference to Ibn-e 'Abbas that the Prophet once said, "When a person passes by the grave of a dead, once acquainted and offers salutations, **ALLAH** returns the spirit of the dead, who acknowledges the same."

- And Abu Hurairah quotes the Prophet,

  "When anyone passes by the grave of a dead acquaintance and offers salutation, the dead acknowledges it." (Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir vol: III, p: 453). Ibn-e Kathir goes on to state that a number of supporting sayings of the Companions are available on the subject.

In books of Fiqh, the non-hearing by the dead, based on the conclusions of some elders, is listed in the *Bab-e Yaqm.* Nothing emanates from Imam Abu Hanifah, Yusuf and Muhammad (the authors of six basic books on Fiqh). Maulana 'Abdul Hayee Lacknavi, an eminent interpreter of Hanafi Law, writes in Sharah Waqayah's Glosses (p: 254),

***In** fine,* no valid argument on the non-hearing, non-perception, non-comprehension or immunity to pain in respect of the dead is available, either from the Book or Hadith. On the other hand, authentic Hadith proves hearing by the dead. The fact is that all references of non-hearing traced to some of the elders comprise their personal explanations and cold polemic. These are of no consequence in the presence of authentic Hadith and sayings of the Companions to the contrary.

Notes:

- No verse of the Qur-an supports non-hearing by the dead.

- The verses relied upon by the critics have been subjected to such misinterpretation as would render the belief of the Prophet and the Companions, contrary to the Book.

- The efforts to establish non-hearing from the incidents of Prophet 'Uzair and the People of the Cave, listed in the Qur-an, is another instance of misinterpretation. These incidents denote lack of knowledge and not of the sense of hearing; the former is not a pre-requisite for the latter. All other verses quoted in this context do not point towards non-hearing but towards absence of authority and divinity of the dead. This is because the infidels used to credit their deities with absolute and personal powers, a false belief, which had to be forcefully refuted.

The Hadith and the statements of the Companions show that they believed in the hearing by the dead. This was also the belief of the majority of the ‘Ulama as discussed above with reference to Fatah al-Bari

The Imams who compiled the Fiqh held the same belief and the opinion of Maulana ‘Abdul Hayee Lacknavi, quoted above, is the final word on the issue.

Caution: It should be clearly understood that the hearing by the dead does not mean that they (particularly the aulia) are vested with powers to fulfil people’s needs and alleviate their sufferings. None of the Hadith grants such powers to the dead. To solicit help from anyone, in absentia, save **ALLAH** amounts to polytheism. Prostration before tombs is strictly forbidden. It is only **ALLAH** *Who* has absolute powers, all Prophets and aulia being totally subservient to *Him*.

Fourth Objection: It is not possible to derive beneficence from the spirit of the dead.

Answer: It has been stated earlier that human attainments in the fields of knowledge and cognition are not divested from the spirit after it departs from the body but on the other hand are amplified in Barzakh. The point to examine now is whether a living human being can meet the spirits in Barzakh and derive beneficence from them or not.

The Prophet’s ﷺ Meeting with the Spirits

Writes Hafiz Ibn-e Kathir in connection with the Night of Ascension,

> Then the Prophet ﷺ met the spirits of other Prophets, who began to praise **ALLAH.** Ibn-e Mas‘ud رضي الله عنه a renowned Companion quotes the Prophet ﷺ, “During my Ascension I met Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام, Musa عليه السلام and ‘Isa عليه السلام. We talked about the Day of Resurrection. Each pointed to the other for answer but everyone denied knowledge about the Hour of its occurrence."

Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir vol: III, p: 16-18

Deriving Beneficence (Faidh) from the Spirit

The Prophet said,

> On my way back from the Ascension I passed by Musa and he enquired about the commandments I had received. I told him that Salah had been enjoined fifty times a day. He observed, 'Your Ummah will not be able to comply with it. I have the experience of my people. I left no stone unturned in the reformation of the Children of Israel but they did not comply with far easier commandments. Do go back to your *Rabb* and request for a reduction.

al-Mishkat Bab al-M'eraj p: 528

Note: Accordingly, the Prophet approached **ALLAH** time and again till Salah was reduced to five times a day.

> The Prophet continues: I met Ibrahim. He conveyed his good wishes to my Ummah with this message, "Paradise has clean and pure clay. Its water is sweet and its ground as plain as the palm of the hand. Gardens grow therein with these sanctifications: *Subhan **ALLAH*** (Glory be to **ALLAH**); *wal-Hamd-o li-**ALLAH** (Praise* to **ALLAH);** and ***ALLAH**-o Akbar* **(ALLAH** is the Greatest)."

al-Mishkat p: 202

Note: These quotations prove that the Prophet met the spirits of other Prophets, heard their messages and, acting on the advice of one of them, obtained concessions for his Ummah.

It must be remembered that whatever the Prophet did or said, or did not prohibit, or approved of when done in his presence, or intended to do, or thought about aloud, or resolved to do, are Hadith of various denominations. The Ummah is bound to follow every kind of Hadith unless specifically proved to the contrary. One of the Prophet's actions has been highlighted above. Let us now examine a few examples within his 'Ummah.

Sa'eed bin 'Abdul 'Aziz states:

> During the days of Harrah, neither the Azan was called in the Prophet's mosque nor congregational prayers were held for three days. Sa'eed bin al-Musayyib (who was blind) remained in the mosque throughout and discerned the Salah timings from the Azan heard from inside the Prophet's tomb."

al-Mishkat p: 545

Writes Imam Ibn-e Taimiyah,

> Narration like the ones that some people heard the reply to salutations from the Prophet's tomb or from the tombs of aulia, and that Sa'eed bin al-Musayyib heard the Azan from the Prophet's tomb for three days during the days of Harrah, neither amount to heresy nor polytheism. All such incidents are true and I need not expatiate because there have been incidents of far greater significance. For example, a person visited the Prophet's tomb and complained of famine. He saw the Prophet who directed him to approach Caliph 'Umar and tell him to hold special prayers for the rain. Such incidents have nothing to do with innovations and polytheism. Many such incidents, in authentic form, are not only proved from the Holy Prophet but also from the righteous of his Ummah.
>
> Iqtadha-e Sirat-e Mustaqim

The incident of the famine is given in Fatah al- Bari (vol: II, p: 238) as narrated by Ibn-e Abi Sheba with due authority.

Note: These Hadith prove the visibility of the spirit, its conversation, its knowledge, its memory of past events, its response to the salutations of the living and its capability to deliver beneficence. Prophet Muhammad himself benefited from the spirits of other Prophets. The complainant of the famine actually saw the Prophet, heard his direction, and conveyed it to Caliph 'Umar. Sa'eed bin al-Musayyib heard the Azan from the Prophet's tomb while awake. These are acoustic proofs of deriving beneficence from the spirit and this is the Prophet's Sunnah, forgotten by the Muslims. Whosoever revives this Sunnah today will be bestowed with the promised reward equal to that of a hundred martyrs. Pitiable indeed is the state of those vicious 'Ulama who dub Tasawwuf and the Path as heresy. As a matter of fact, this Sunnah cannot be rejuvenated without following the Path and receiving spiritual beneficence.

As for intuitive proof, all sufis and scholars agree that the devout of the Ummah do derive beneficence from the spirit. How this happens is a matter which cannot be comprehended without close association with them. It is not a matter of ordinary knowledge and cannot be acquired by reading books. The ignorant and the learned externalists are at par in this. Angels are highly sacred beings but are unable to comprehend marital bliss or the taste of honey, because of the maxim: He who tastes, discovers the taste and only the striving one finds his goal. Therefore, to derive beneficence from the spirit, discipleship of an accomplished Shaikh is compulsory as well as devotion to zikr, with **ALLAH**'s Pleasure as the only motive, it will ultimately lead to the unfolding of this truth.

It has been stated earlier that any earnest seeker, desiring nothing but *His* Pleasure is extended an open invitation to join our Halqah. **ALLAH** willing, within a period of six months, he will also see for himself how the spirit in Illiyyin (the station for spirits of righteous in Paradise) has connection with the body whether intact or in shreds. He will further see the nature of relationship of the Holy Prophet's spirit with his sacred body and the state of life in his tomb. Indeed he will also be able to observe how the lights irradiating from the Prophet's bosom reach the believers' hearts, stabilising their faith.

I know that these lines will cause anguish to some people but it is not uncommon. Contemporaries seldom acknowledge each others attainments, it is quite possible that professional Muftis will hurry to criticise; such has been the reaction in every age. My only aim is to expound the truth and to present Islamic mysticism in its pristine form, which has been mutilated beyond recognition by mundane hypocrites. The coming generations will, **ALLAH** willing, certainly benefit from it.

Fifth Objection: If accomplished sufis have the honour of seeing the Prophet, they become his additional Companions; in their conversation, whatever they hear from him is additional Hadith. Where then do we draw a line between the original and the additional?

Answer:

Conditions for Companionship

There are two conditions for Companionship: The first is the physical existence and its requirements, e.g., discharging obligations like Salah, Fasting, Hajj, Zakat, etc, besides adherence to other duties imposed by Shari'ah. The second is the privilege of the Prophet's company in his earthly existence:

> This does not mean that those who see the Prophet spiritually become his Companions. The Prophet's Companions are those believers who saw him during his life in this world, and not in the celestial one.

Fatawa al-Hadithiah p: 206

In the case of sufis, these two conditions are not fulfilled. They are blessed with a spiritual association in Barzakh where the spirit does have a connection with the body but quite different to that of its erstwhile earthly existence. Therefore, the question of becoming a Companion does not arise.

The Reality of Hadith

Whatever the Prophet perceived through spiritual inspiration and recounted it in this earthly existence is Hadith. So the spiritual conversation of the Prophet with the sufis cannot be termed as such. However, the confirmation of an existing Hadith may be obtained from him. Here is an example, as listed in al-Mishkat. Abi ‘Ayyash, a Companion, once described the reward of reciting *La Ilaha ill-**ALLAH**, wa **ALLAH**-o Akbar* (There is no God except **ALLAH** and *He* is the Greatest). A Companion from the audience saw the Prophet in his dream and got it confirmed as genuine.

Note: The Ahadith so confirmed have been included in the relevant books. However, it must be remembered that this confirmation pertained to what had already been stated by the Prophet in his terrestrial existence. No new commands are issued as a result of the Prophet’s spiritual conversation in Barzakh. This is the way of the sufis, who get such confirmation, not in a dream, but in full consciousness. Sufis, bestowed with kashf, obtain confirmation of a Hadith through another method. When a genuine Hadith is recited, it radiates a certain light, while gloom follows a fabricated one. They can discern both the light as well as the darkness. By this method the learned sufis can distinguish between a genuine and a concocted Hadith.

Sixth Objection: During the time of Khulafa-e Rashidin, there had been a difference of opinion among the Companions regarding the selection of the Caliphs. These differences led to the Battles of Jamal and Safin. Why did the Companions not seek solutions to these problems by spiritual consultation with the Prophet? No such consultations are attributed to the Companions. How can the sufis achieve what even the Companions failed to do?

Answer: There are two parts of this objection. First, we will explain why the Companions did not seek solutions of their problems through spiritual consultation with the Prophet.

The Qur-an deals with the issue of caliphate and enumerates the attributes of caliphs, but without naming anyone. The Prophet also made a number of predictions, further elaborated their attributes, but did not mention any names. Similarly, the Prophet gave indications of impending tribulations and of the appearance of the Dajjal (the Antichrist) and impostors of Prophethood, again without naming them. This shows that the Prophet in his earthly existence, did not name his successor, nor did he indicate the steps to be taken to allay the impending tribulations. The Companions too, on their part did not solicit the solution of such important problems during his lifetime. Why then, should they consult him after his passing away?

The real reason why the Prophet did not indicate the solutions of these problems during his lifetime is that problems cannot be solved before they actually occur. To choose a caliph or to meet a crisis, as and when it arises, is the responsibility of the Ummah. However, the way has been shown by **ALLAH** and *His* Messenger by enunciating broad principles. It has been left to the Muslims to channelise their prowess and their abilities in the light of these guide lines.

The second part of this objection is that no such incidents of kashf of the Companions are available. This is not true. To recount only a few:

- Imam Razi describes the interment of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. The Companions, after the obsequies, brought the bier to the door of the apartment in which the Prophet is buried. Then an announcer called, "O Messenger of **ALLAH,** peace be upon you! Here is Abu Bakr at your door." The door opened instantly and a voice was heard from inside the tomb, 'Bring the friend to his friend.'

Tafsir-e Kabir vol: V, p: 465

Note: The criticism by the Shi'ites on the subject of Jawar ar-Rasul (Neighbourhood of the Prophet) has been fully answered in a Treatise titled al-Faruq. It has been proved in scores of books that Abu Bakr As-Siddiq was buried in the Prophet's apartment by his side with his explicit permission. There were thousands of Companions present who heard this voice from the Prophet's tomb.

- Ibn-e Kathir and Ibn-e Hajr relate an incident concerning Caliph 'Umar. A young man living in the Prophet's mosque died. A few days later Caliph 'Umar came to know about it and went to his father to offer condolence and later attended his grave. So Caliph 'Umar went to his grave and offered funeral prayers along with his comrades.
  Addressing the youth the Caliph recited,

  But for him who fears the standing before his Rabb, there are two gardens.

  (55:46)

  The youth replied from inside the grave, "O 'Umar! My *Rabb* has twice blessed me with the said bounty."

Tafsir Ibn-e Kathir vol: 11, p: 279.

- The incident of Sa‘eed bin al-Musayyib has been listed earlier. He had stayed in the Prophet's mosque for three days and offered his daily Salah on hearing the Azan from inside the Prophet's tomb.

- The incident of a man who visited the Prophet's tomb, complained of famine, got an answer and conveyed it to Caliph ‘Umar, has already been noted.

- Ibn-e ‘Abbas states that a Companion pitched his tent on a grave by mistake. He suddenly heard a voice from inside the grave, reciting Surat al-Mulk

al-Mishkat p: 127.

The five incidents of spiritual conversation should be studied in detail. Thousands of the Companions heard the Holy Prophet's spirit calling, “Bring the friend to his friend.” on the eve of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq's burial. A group of people were accompanying Caliph ‘Umar when the deceased, addressing the Caliph by name, answered his question. This should be enough to prove spiritual conversation by the Companions.

The Prophet's Resolve and Kashf-e Qubur

> Hadhrat ‘Aishah once asked the Prophet about the children of the infidels. He replied, “If you like, I can make you hear their cries from Hell.”

Besides there is a Hadith in al-Mishkat narrated by Zaid bin Thabit, The Prophet said,

> Had I not feared that you would stop burying the dead, I would have supplicated to my *Rabb* to let you see the chastisement to infidels in their graves.

These two Hadith prove that through the Prophet's supplication Hadhrat ‘Aishah and the Companions would have attained kashf without endeavour, had they so desired. It has been stated earlier that Prophet's resolve is also a Hadith and these two incidents express his resolve. Therefore, to revive this Sunnah is precisely an act of adherence to him.

The Prophet ﷺ's Madrissah

The Prophet ﷺ was the most learned and the most perfect human being. To derive beneficence from him, people of different dispositions and mental and physical capabilities gathered around him. Information and instructions covering all aspects of life in this and the next world were available in his company. But no individual had the capacity or capability to acquire the entire knowledge and excellence of the Prophet ﷺ. Moreover, it was not the Divine Will to bestow all his abilities and virtues on any other single individual. Therefore, each Companion benefited according to his inherent capability and **ALLAH**'s Will. This sacred school produced preachers, teachers, commentators, traditionalists, jurists, judges, fundamentalists, scholars (Motakallim), analysts, men of kashf and ilham, sufis, adepts, soldiers, generals, ministers and caliphs equipped with different grades of knowledge. It is strange that the critics do not question as to why all the Companions were not commentators, traditionalists and jurists but clamour without hesitation why all of them did not acquire kashf, ilham and mysticism

The mind is seized with horror at this bizarre absurdity!

The second basic principle which should be borne in mind is that the knowledge imparted by the Prophet ﷺ was about basic rules and fundamentals. It was left for erudite and learned interpreters of his Ummah to deduce corollaries and subsidiary regulations. It has been the way of **ALLAH** that *His* Messengers lay down fundamental principles leaving it to competent and capable intellectuals to frame, in the light of said principles, rules and regulations for the solution of theoretical and practical problems which might arise from time to time.

The third consideration which must be kept in view is, that during the time of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, the basic and fundamental principles of various sciences pertaining to the Faith were laid down in concise and elementary forms without detail. There were no separate compilations, for example, of Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, fundamentals, grammar, or etymology etc. But, as time passed and new exigencies arose, copious works on the aforesaid subjects were gradually compiled containing minute details and subsidiary regulations; similarly the science of Tasawwuf gradually developed. But while the absence of standard works of Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, etc, during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Companions causes no uneasiness to the bigoted critic, he is perturbed at the emergence of the permanent science of Tasawwuf because it did not exist during the time of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. As a matter of fact, learned sufis, like experts of other sciences, found the essentials of their branch of knowledge scattered, and so they collated them and subsequently deduced subsidiary rules and regulations. They discovered the means to attain the goal of Ihsan, and codified them, but kept the means distinct from the goal. However, it must be remembered that men of genius are always rare. During the time of the Prophet ﷺ, each Companion got his share of knowledge according to his capacity and propensity. For example:

Hadhrat Huzaifah was the bearer of such secrets which none else knew, he even knew the hypocrites. He was also bestowed with the knowledge of future events, other Companions were not so blessed.

Fatah al-Bari vol: XIII, p: 29.

This shows that Hadhrat Huzaifah was blessed with unique knowledge of kashf and ilham and Divine secrets, which no other Companion possessed. To ask as to why all the Companions were not so blessed would mean questioning Divine Wisdom and Will.

The fourth basic principle is that Tasawwuf or ihsan is an important branch of the Faith and it is an established rule that when a fundamental is proved, its elements stand proved too.

Kashf and ilham are essential elements of Tasawwuf or Ihsan which, according to Hadith-e Jibril, is an essential part of the Faith. Hence the acceptance of the Faith means acceptance of Tasawwuf, which in turn implies acceptance of kashf and ilham. However, it is essential that the Shaikh be accomplished and the seeker earnest. The attributes of excellence of the Prophets are directly bestowed by **ALLAH**, that is why these attributes saturate their companions by virtue of their company and without any endeavour on the companions' part. However, sincerity of intention is the key note, otherwise one remains deprived like 'Abdullah ibn-e Ubayy (the leader of the hypocrites in Madinah). The attributes of excellence of the aulia are duly acquired, hence their disciples attain these through their company and with due diligence and endeavour.

In brief, the learned sufis follow the Sunnah of the Prophet and his Companions, with regard to spiritual conversations with the dead. The means and methods used by them for this purpose may be new but that is immaterial, since the goal is legitimate and laudable, the means and methods adopted to achieve it fall in the same category. The real investment of the aulia is their love of **ALLAH** and *His* Prophet. To see the Holy Prophet is, in fact, the reward of this love and none deserves it better than the lovers of the Holy Prophet. Their true state is summed up in the following words in Fatah al-Bari p: 45:

> There are many among them, who, when mention is made of the Prophet, are seized with a longing to see him. They set out for his abode, forgetting and forsaking parents, kith and kin and their property. They are ready to face grave dangers to attain their goal. It has been observed that such men give preference to visiting the abode of the Holy Prophet, his tomb, the places he walked and the paths he trod, over their lives, property and kith and kin, because their hearts are saturated with his love. However, this state disappears in case of heedlessness.

Note: The desire to visit the Prophet tomb and the places where he walked is an index of his love. This being so, how fortunate are those who see him physically and spiritually! But this can be achieved only when the ardour to follow his Sunnah reaches its climax. This is the only criterion of his love, as highlighted by the saying of the Prophet,

"Whosoever loves my Sunnah, indeed loves me."

Nevertheless, this love fades out when the heart sinks into forgetfulness. The sufis have shown the way to guard against it and they have prescribed some exercises. Their adoption results in the rekindling of the flame of love, which ultimately leads to a spiritual audience with the Prophet, his observation, and the privilege of spiritual conversation with him; **ALLAH** willing, this relationship-in-love grows into a permanent bond with the passage of time. This is the way followed in our Order. If anyone considers observation of the Prophet, his audience and conversation with him, as sinful acts then, of course, the means adopted for their attainment will also be so. One the other hand, if these are not sins but constitute the very Faith in its sublimity, the means adopted to achieve them will also fall in the same category.

Why Kashf and Ilham Increased after the Companion' Era

It is generally conceded that there has been a spectacular increase in the kashf and karamah of the aulia who came after the Companions. This is so because the frequency of kashf and karamah at any period, is mainly regulated by the standard of faith simultaneously possessed by the masses. When their faith is strong there is hardly any need for kashf and karamah, which strengthen it further. During the Companions' era, the Faith was extremely strong because of the blessing of the Prophet's company and required no support through kashf etc. Subsequently, the strength of the Faith waned and people demanded some faith-reinvigorating tokens from the aulia. It must, however, be remembered that extraordinary or supernatural acts do not constitute conditions or essentials of wilayah, these are bestowed only as tokens for its identification and veracity.

It has already been stated that kashf and ilham are deputies which follow revelation. The Companions' period was that of revelation and Divine lights were transmitted through the person of the Holy Prophet. Hence there was no need for a deputy, just as the presence of the sun eliminates the necessity for the moon, the stars, lamps and candles. It is a matter of daily observation that light is needed only after the sunset. And yet again the sunset is not followed by sudden darkness. The light remains for a time and decreases gradually until darkness overtakes it and prevails. Similarly, after the passing away of the Holy Prophet, the light of faith diminished gradually through the periods of the Companions, the Tabi'in (those who immediately followed them), the Tab'a-Tabi'in (those who came after the Tabi'in) and subsequent generations. The learned sufis continued to enlighten every age, their beneficence lighted a lamp here and a candle there, at one place appeared a star, at another, a moon (signifying the degree of Divine

light transmitted by the aulia). In short, it is through the instrumentality of the aulia that the light of faith in varying degree is sustained to this day. The sole object of this study is to prove that the variations in the degree of kashf and ilham correspond directly to the strength or weakness of the faith of existing Muslims. Consequently, the manifestations and extraordinary display of kashf and ilham were naturally more frequent after the Companions' period.

Anyone seeking further details may study Maulana Jami's Shawahid-e Nabuwwah (p: 147) and Fatawa al-Hadithiah (p: 261).

Seventh Objection: Recounting the names of personalities in the Chain of Transmission is not valid. It amounts to polytheism.

Answer: Let us draw on the Book and Hadith for the answer:

> *"Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind); If you love **ALLAH**, follow me; **ALLAH** will love you..."* (3:31)

> The Prophetﷺ once prayed, "O *Rabb!* I implore *You* for *Your* Love and the love of those who love *You.*" And the Prophet'sﷺ Sunnah identifies the means to attain **ALLAH**'s Love including his prayer for the love of those whom *He* Loves. It is obvious that only **ALLAH**'s devoted slaves are loved by *Him.* Consequently their love leads to *His* obedience as well as *His* Nearness and it is natural to remember the beloved frequently and regularly.

Tuhfa tuz-Zakirin p:331.

Notes: Three points are highlighted from the above:

- One should adopt the means which promote *His* remembrance (zikr) and these means themselves constitute zikr.
- The love for the aulia and mentioning their names paves the way to *His* obedience and Nearness.
- Anything held dear by a person is often remembered by him. Consequently the validity of the Chains of Transmission is proved.

Students of the science of Hadith recount the chain of narrators of every Hadith before reading its text. This is meritorious and fruitful, since it is the only way to trace a Hadith right up to the Holy Prophetﷺ and establish its authenticity. Recounting the Chain of Transmission follows the same analogy, Ihsan (as defined in Hadith-e Jibril) being the essence of the Faith and the end result of all worship, is another name for Tasawwuf, which can be identified only through the Chain of Transmission. If the chain connects the Shaikh with the Prophetﷺ, he is a genuine wali, just as the learned Hadith scholars critically examine the chain of narrators before adjudging the veracity of a Hadith.

> Here is a well known incident in the history of Hadith. When Imam ‘Ali Radha arrived in Neshapur, he was requested by Imam Abu Zarah and Imam Muslim Tusi (both Hadith scholars) to narrate a Hadith traceable through his ancestors to the Prophet, he obliged, recited a Hadith and ecounted its narrators. About twenty thousand persons in the audience recorded it. Comments Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, “If this chain be recounted before a lunatic, he will be cured.”

Sawa‘iq Moharraqa by ‘Allama Ibn-e Hajr

Caution: With a view towards attaining **ALLAH**’s Nearness, it is commendable to recount the names of the aulia in a Chain of Transmission because they help cultivate *His* Love and follow the Prophet’s Sunnah. But any presumption that they wield independent authority, influence and are omnipresent, etc, would amount to renouncing one’s faith, which would naturally lead to a tragic end.

Eighth Objection: It is said that Tasawwuf is proved from Twatir whereas Imam Hassan Basri’s meeting with Hadhrat ‘Ali is not proved.

Answer: All veteran sufis are unanimous that the meeting did take place. Sa‘eed Ahmad Qashashi, in his al-‘Aqd al-Farld fi Silasil Ahl-e Tauhid has proved this meeting after an elaborate discourse. Shah Wali Ullah Dehlawi claims a consensus of sufis on this issue:

> According to the veterans of the Path, Imam Basri’s meeting with Hadhrat ‘Ali is fully established, but is not admitted by the scholars of Hadith.

al-Intibah fi Silsilah-e Aulia **ALLAH** p: 31

Note: The difference between the verdict of the two is that the former agree on the meeting as conclusive, and without exception, while the latter declare that there is some evidence, but it is not conclusive. They do unanimously concede a meeting but deny a prolonged association. Even if a prolonged association is taken as a condition for beneficence, the possibility of indirect beneficence cannot be ruled out. Therefore, a direct beneficence could be denied but not indirect beneficence.

Likewise, the Imam’s hearing of Hadith from Hadhrat ‘Ali and its subsequent narration is also a point of debate, but the fact generally conceded is that is did take place.

Now if the principle of indirect beneficence is accepted, an intermediary has to be identified. Here, thousands of Companions who had been the associates of Hadhrat ‘Ali had met Imam Hassan. He might have attained beneficence from anyone of them. Spiritual beneficence and its transmission cannot be discerned by a third person. As a matter of principle, lack of knowledge or intuition does not negate the existence of knowledge.

When scholars of Hadith agree on a meeting as well as the hearing of Hadith, there is no reason to reject the possibility that the initiation of beneficence began with Hadhrat ‘Ali but subsequent progress was made through some of his associates.

Testimony From the Cyclopedia of Hadith Narrators

(1) The Meeting and the Hearing:

Ibn-e Sa‘ad said, “Imam Hassan Basri was born two years before the end of Hadhrat ‘Umar’s caliphate. He was brought up in the Vale of Qura, was highly eloquent and had met Hadhrat ‘Ali.”

(2) Narration of Hadith:

> Imam Hassan Basri narrated Hadith from Ubayy bin K‘ab, Sa‘ad bin ‘Abadah and ‘Umar bin Khattab, but never met these Companions. He also narrated Hadith of Thoban, ‘Amar bin Yasir, and Makal bin Yasar but did not hear the same from them. He also narrated Hadith from Hadhrat Uthman and Hadhrat ‘Ali.

Tafsir-e Mazhari

(3) Imam Abu Zarah was asked if Imam Hassan had heard any Hadith from a Companion of the Battle of Badr. He said that the Imam had seen a number of them but did not hear any Hadith from them. He had also seen Caliphs ‘Uthman and ‘Ali but again did not hear Hadith from them. He had seen Caliph ‘Ali in Madinah, before the departure of the Caliph to Kufah and Basrah but did not meet him thereafter. Imam Hassan Basri said that he had personally seen Zubair taking Bai‘at at Caliph ‘Ali’s hands. ‘Ali Almadini said that Imam Hassan Basri had seen Caliph ‘Ali in Madinah.

Tehzib at-Tehzib

Notes:

- The meeting is proved unanimously.
- The hearing of Hadith is attended by a difference of opinion.
- The evidence of hearing is far stronger than that of non-hearing, since the meeting has taken place, which necessarily suggests hearing of something.

Here is a side note from Tehzib al-Kamal: Yunus bin ‘Obaid says that he once put a question to Imam Hassan, “How do you quote the Prophet in your narrations when you have not seen him?” The Imam replied, “O my nephew, you have asked me something never asked by anyone before. Had I not trusted you, I would not have answered you. Now listen, unfortunately I have been placed under such circumstances that I cannot openly quote Hadhrat ‘Ali (for fear of reprisals at the hands of the greatest tyrant of the Muslim Ummah, Hajjaj bin Yusuf). However, take it for granted that the Hadith you hear from me being directly ascribed to the Prophet**,** has reached me from Caliph ‘Ali, son of Abi Talib.”

Notes:

- It is generally accepted principle that a positive argument overrides a negative one. Therefore, the positive testimony of hearing and seeing Hadhrat ‘Ali will receive preference over the negative.
- Imam Hassan lived for two years during Hadhrat ‘Umar’s caliphate and for twelve years during that of Hadhrat ‘Uthman. He also witnessed the commencement of Hadhrat ‘Ali’s caliphate in Madinah. That he would not have heard Hadith from any of the Companions, or from those who took part in the Battle of Badr, or from Hadhrat ‘Ali, is therefore, incredible. Their meeting confirms both hearing and narration. To hold otherwise would be irrational and must be rejected.

Writes ‘Allama Sayuti

One group of scholars, who remember Hadith by heart have denied the hearing of Hadith by Imam Hassan from Hadhrat ‘Ali. But another group have confirmed the hearing and I am inclined to agree with them. Hafiz Haya ud-Din Muqadassi also accepts this view in his book Mukhtarah for the following reasons:

- The learned fundamentalists agree that a positive argument has an edge over the negative because it denotes the existence of some knowledge on which it is based.
- Imam Hassan Basri was born two years before Hadhrat ‘Umar’s caliphate ended. His mother was the maid-servant of Umm-e Salmah, one of the Prophet’s wives, who used to send Imam Hassan Basri to the Companions for blessing. Once she sent him to Hadhrat ‘Umar who blessed him with these words, “O **ALLAH**! Bestow on him special understanding of the Faith and endear him to the people.” Writes Hafiz Jamil ud-Din Mazzi in his Tehzib that at the time of Caliph Hadhrat ‘Uthman’s siege by the rebels, Imam Hassan Basri was fourteen years old. It is admitted that at the age of seven he was commanded to

offer Salah and attended congregational prayers. He offered his prayers behind Hadhrat 'Uthman, till the latter was martyred. He continued to pray under the leadership of Caliph Hadhrat 'Ali till the latter's departure from Madinah. Hadhrat 'Ali left for Kufah after the martyrdom of Caliph 'Uthman. How can it be denied that Imam Hassan Basri heard Hadhrat 'Ali, when he used to pray behind him five times a day. This was at the discerning age of fourteen. Moreover, Hadhrat 'Ali used to call on the Prophet's wives, including Umm-e Salmah and Imam Hassan Basri had been living with her along with his mother.

Proof on Record.

'Allama Sayuti has listed ten Ahadith, narrated by Imam Hassan on the authority of Hadhrat 'Ali, which prove the meeting.

al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 191.

Imam Abu Zarah said that when Hadhrat 'Ali took the oath as Caliph, Imam Hassan Basri was fourteen years old; he saw the Caliph in Madinah. 'Allama Sayuti says that the said ten Hadith confirm the meeting of Imam Hassan Basri with Hadhrat 'Ali and also his hearing of Hadith from him. The arguments advanced against it relate to the period following his departure to Kufah.

al-Hawi lil Fatawa vol: II, p: 193.

Ninth Objection: Some people hold that to stand or sit facing the graves of saints or other Muslims and then to raise the hands in supplication is prohibited.

Answer: There are two parts of this objection, namely;

- ♣ that it is prohibited to raise hands in supplication while visiting graves, and
- ♣ that facing the graves while supplicating is forbidden.

First, we should bear in mind that the Sunnah prescribes some etiquettes of supplication, which must be observed:

- ➢ Imam Nawawi states that according to Sunnah, in supplications intended for deliverance from distress, hands should be raised upside down, and in other cases hands should be raised palms upwards.

Fatah al-Bari vol: II, p: 352

- And ‘Allama Shokani says that,

  To raise the hands to the level of the shoulders is supported by no less than thirty Hadith.

  Tuhfa tuz-Zakirin p: 42

- According to Salman Farsi, the Prophet declared:

  “**ALLAH** is extremely Gracious and Bountiful. When *His* bondsman raises his hands in supplication, *He* is averse to disappointing him.”

- According to Hadhrat Ans, the Prophet said:

  “**ALLAH** is extremely Merciful and Beneficent. *He* does not like to disappoint *His* slave when he raises his hands in supplication.”

- According to Hadhrat Malik bin Bashar, the Prophet said:

  “When you ask anything from **ALLAH**, raise your hands with palms facing upwards and not downwards.”

Note: These quotations establish that it is in accordance with Sunnah to raise the hands in supplication with palms upwards but when seeking relief from any distress palms should be downwards.

Why the hands are raised at all in supplication, is answered by the learned scholars,

It may be asked as to why the hands are raised towards the heaven at the time of supplication. This action signifies that **ALLAH** is there in the heavens, while *He* is Omnipresent. The answer lies in the counter question: Why do we turn our face towards the K‘abah during Salah, does **ALLAH** reside in the K‘abah? As a matter of fact the heaven is our direction for supplication just as the K‘abah is for Salah.

Musamarah p: 30

Imam Ghazali says, “Just as heaven is the direction for supplications, the holy K‘abah is the direction for Salah. The One worshipped in Salah is the same as the One addressed in supplication. He is Omnipresent.”

al-lqtesad fil Eteqad p: 23

Notes:

- It is established that just as Salah cannot be performed or accepted without facing the K‘abah, a supplication will not be granted unless the hands are raised to *Him.*
- It is also evident that if the hands are not raised while praying for the dead the supplication will not be granted, and they will not benefit from it.

In fine, the raising of the hands in supplication is strictly in accordance with the Sunnah, whether such supplication is made at a grave or elsewhere.

Here is an example of the Prophet himself. States Hadhrat ‘Aishah,

> The Prophet one night went to Jannat al-Baqi‘a (The cemetery at Madinah). I followed him**.** He stood there for a long time, then raised his hands in supplication and prayed three times before returning.

Imam Nawawi states that the above action of the Prophet is an authority for a long and repeated supplication and for raising the hands for the purpose. It also proves that it is preferable to keep standing during supplication at the graves.

The diversionists argue in favour of a new practice for supplication at the grave. They hold that one should turn ones back towards it. To give weight to their view they misquote Imam Abu Hanifah. In fact, this view has been advanced by ‘Allama Kirmani and ‘Allama Abu Laith Samarkandi and it is against all canon of justice to attribute it to the Hanafi School of Thought. Imam Abu Hanifah states on the authority of Ibn-e ‘Umar,

> The proper method according to Sunnah is that you approach the Prophet’s shrine from the direction of the K‘abah and facing towards the tomb invoke peace and **ALLAH**’s blessing on him.

Musnad-e Imam A‘azam p: 27.

> According to some of the Companions, whenever Anas bin Malik went to the Prophet’s shrine he raised both his hands and stood facing the tomb. Imam Malik states that whenever Ibn-e Wahhab offered his salutations to the Prophet**,** he turned his face towards the sacred shrine with his back towards the K‘abah.

Shifa fi Haqq al-Mustafa p: 235

Note: The above facts prove that the method advocated by Imam Abu Hanifah and the practice of some of the illustrious Companions was to supplicate facing towards a grave with their back towards the K'abah.

Finally, here is 'Allama Shokani's verdict.

> Experience shows that supplications at the graves of the aulia are granted promptly, provided they are made in accordance with the Sunnah.

Tuhfa tuz-Zakirin p: 55

To sum up, it is the Prophet ﷺ's Sunnah to supplicate for the dead, sitting or standing, with the hands raised and face towards the grave. This is the creed of Imam Abu Hanifah and, according to; Allama Shokani, supplications at the graves of the righteous are promptly granted. But it must be emphasised that supplication is made to **ALLAH**, and not to the entombed.

CHAPTER-XXII

DEVOTEES' CODE OF BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS THE SHAIKH

There are numerous ways of living in this world, yet life is rendered far more purposeful and pleasant if lived with due decorum and dexterity. Every business in life has its own principles which must be observed in order to ensure success. Education and training is a delicate and exacting task which calls for constant endeavour. The slightest carelessness may cause considerable damage that is why **ALLAH**, in *His* infinite mercy, laid down explicit instructions for receiving education and training from the greatest benefactor and patron, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

> *O you who believe! Lift not up your voices above the voice of the Prophet, lest your works be rendered vain while you perceive it not.* (49:2)
>
> *(As for) those who call out to you from behind private chambers, most of them have no sense. And if they had patience till you came forth to them, it would certainly be better for them.* (49:5)

From these commands, the authors of al-Abraiz (p: 243) and 'Awarif al-M'aarif (vol: I, p: 59) conclude:

> While in the company of his Shaikh, the devotee should bear the spirit of these instructions in mind. He should pass from self while in his presence and work in consultation with and at the behest of his Shaikh. The responsibility of the Shaikh as an accredited representative of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is the reformation and spiritual growth of his disciples. The duty of devotees, on their part, is to draw beneficence by following the ways of the Companions. These etiquettes form the basis and constitute the authority of Islamic mysticism.

They continue:

> The learned sufis follow the way of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, and a true follower becomes **ALLAH**'s beloved according to the following declaration in the Qur-an,
>
> *Say (O Muhammad) to mankind, if you love **ALLAH** follow me, **ALLAH** will love you.* (3:31)

This commandment is elaborated in al-Bukhari and al-Muslim. **ALLAH** declares: “In no way does *My* servant draw so near to *Me* as when performing those duties which *I* have imposed on him. *My* servant continues to draw near to *Me* through supplemental works until *I* love him, and when *I* love him, *I* become his ears so that he hears by *Me*, and his eyes so that he sees by *Me,* and his hands so that he receives by *Me,* and his feet so that he walks by *Me.* Indeed *I* act through him.”

The sole aim of a slave’s life is to attain *His* nearness. The way to do so is to be resolute in the obligatory commands of the Shari‘ah and to increase supplemental works according to the Sunnah; as a result, he becomes **ALLAH**’s beloved.

At this stage, his will and wishes merge with those of **ALLAH.** Apparently he is working, but in reality, **ALLAH** is behind his every action as illustrated in the Qur-an, *You did not throw when you threw but **ALLAH** threw.* Undoubtedly, **ALLAH** has revealed the code of conduct before the Prophet ﷺ. We have now to see how his students (the Companions) practiced and obeyed these rules, their conduct or etiquette constitute a branch of the Faith and must be followed by the devotees of a Shaikh. Had their conduct been outside the pale of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ would have certainly forbidden it.

Here are some illustrations of how the Companions sat in the audience of the Holy Prophet.

The Companions’ Conduct

Narrates Bara bin ‘Azib رضي الله عنه,

> Once the Prophet took his seat facing the K‘abah. We all sat around him, quiet and motionless, as if birds were perched on our heads.

This state of the Companions has been highlighted in many a Hadith as mentioned in Ash‘at al-Lam‘at. Such a state is reached when:

- Shaikh becomes the focal point of one’s attention,
- Neither the eye nor the thoughts stray,
- Ears are ever alert to any conversation of the Shaikh for ultimate benefit.

The Companions achieved this status because they regarded the Holy Prophet ﷺ as the fountainhead of all guidance and themselves as utterly needy. Keeping this in view, the seeker should sit in the company of his Shaikh in such a manner that:

- His entire attention is focused on the Shaikh, his eyes and thoughts should not be allowed to stray;

- The seekers in the advanced stages of the Path should sit contemplating the highest attained stages to fully benefit from the beneficence being reflected the Shaikh's bosom;

- Those in the initial stages, should try to correlate their heart with the heart of the Shaikh. A battery when connected to the main continues to receive the charging current silently. Similarly, the devotee should align his heart with that of the Shaikh so as to be charged with Divine lights.

The Companions' Obedience of the Prophet ﷺ

States Jabir رضي الله عنه:

> The Prophet ﷺ (once) took his seat on the pulpit and bade everyone to sit down, at that moment Ibn-e Mas'ud رضي الله عنه was at the gate of the mosque, on hearing the Prophet ﷺ's words he instantly sat down where he was. The Prophet ﷺ saw him sitting at the gate and beckoned him to come forward.

Writes 'Allama Sayuti in his Khasais al-Kubra vol: I, p: 165,

> On a Friday, as soon as the Prophet ﷺ took his seat on the pulpit he asked everyone to sit down. When the call was heard by 'Abdullah bin Rawahah Ansari رضي الله عنه he was in the Bani Ghanam tribe and instantly sat down.

These two incidents indicate the extent to which the Companions obeyed the Prophet ﷺ. They did not try to find out the occasion or the reason for the Prophet's ﷺ command, they heard it and instantly complied with it.

The conduct of the Companions provides the guidelines to mystics, i.e., if an order of the Shaikh is not against any categorical injunctions of the Shari'ah, it should be complied with by his devotees immediately. A devotee cannot be expected to comprehend the motive of every act of the Shaikh as proved by the account of Prophet Musa عليه السلام and Hadhrat Khidhar in the Qur-an.

The Companions' Reverence of the Prophet

- Nasim ar-Riyadh Sharah Shafa vol: II, p: 265

> Amir M'uawiyah died in Syria in 60 A.H. at the age of 76-78 years, while a Caliph. He possessed two coverings, some hair and nails of the Prophet. His body was wrapped in those sheets while the hair and nails were placed in his nostrils and mouth in accordance with his will.

- 'Awarif al-M'aarif vol: I, p: 106.

> One covering was purchased by Amir M'uawiyah from the descendants of K'ab Bin Zahir for twenty thousand Dirhams (approximately five thousand rupees). Details of the incident are as follows;
>
> When K'ab embraced Islam, the Prophet took off his covering and gifted it to him. Hadhrat M'uawiyah wanted to purchase it from K'ab but the latter flatly refused saying, "I think no one has a better right to possess it than myself." After K'ab's death, Amir M'uawiyah, purchased it from his descendants for twenty thousand Dirham. This sacred covering kept changing hands over the generations till it reached an-Nasir lid-Din, the Governor of Egypt, during Shaikh Shahab ud-Din's time."

This anecdote has a moral, i.e., that the Shaikh's garments should also be respected. This is what love and good manners dictate.

Nasim ar-Riyadh vol: III, p: 157 and Raudh al-Anf vol: 11, p: 321 make mention of a letter of the Prophet written to Caesar of Rome. He was a Christian but conversant with the status of Prophets. He left a will, advising his descendants to look after this letter with utmost reverence. Caesar had preserved the Prophet's letter in a golden tube with great care and adoration, which passed down the chain of Roman kings in heritage.

According to Fatah al-Bari,

> The Christian king said: "This letter is the same as written by your Prophet to my ancestor, Caesar; this has come down to us in heritage. Our forefathers had left a will that the kingdom would be preserved so long as this letter remained in our custody. That's why we look after it, respect it and keep it in the most secret and safest custody in order to ensure the integrity of our empire."

This passage of Fatah al-Bari refers to the account of Nur ud-Din Bin Sa'igh of Damascus: "I was sent as an emissary of Khalifah Mansur 'Abbasi to a Christian king. The king brought out a golden tube wrapped in silken handkerchief from a box, from this tube he took out the aforesaid letter. I wanted to kiss it but the king forbade it on the grounds that it was already worn out and might be further damaged in the process. He believed that his kingdom would perish if the letter was destroyed."

The aulia conclude that the care and reverence shown to the letter of the Shaikh guarantees the safety of a seeker's spiritual kingdom, just as the respect shown to the Prophet's letter guaranteed the safety of a worldly kingdom. On the contrary, the disrespect shown by Chosroes (Khusro Parvez by tearing the Prophet's letter) resulted in the destruction of his kingdom.

How painfully amazing that Muslims today take pride in naming their sons after this insolent infidel, out of sheer ignorance, a practice which must be thoroughly discouraged.

The Companions' Love for the Prophet

- al-Bukhari vol: I, p: 31

  The Companions would leap to procure the water falling from the Prophet's ablution.

- al-Bukhari vol: I, p: 38

  The Companions never let the spittle of the Prophet fall on the ground. They would take it on their hands and rub it on their hands, faces and bodies.

These actions indicate the extent of love they had for the Prophet

The Companions' Regard for Each Other's Status and Deference for the Prophet's Teachings

Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas used to visit the house of Hadhrat Ubayy bin K'ab to receive instructions in the Qur-an, he never knocked at the door but would quietly wait outside and this weighed heavily on the latter's mind. One day bin K'ab told him to knock at the door to announce his arrival, Ibn-e 'Abbas replied, "A learned scholar has the same status with his people as a Prophet with his Ummah. Referring to the visitors who arrived at the Prophet's house and summoned him by name, **ALLAH** commanded, *If they had patience till you came forth to them, it had been better for them.* I witnessed this when I was young and have since behaved with my elders in accordance with this Divine injunction."

As regards the etiquette of a student for his teacher, the scholars of Hadith, Tibrani, and al-Ghazali (in his Ahya ul-'Ulum) have quoted this incident from Imam Shabi: Once Hadhrat Zaid bin Thabit after leading a funeral prayer was about to ride his horse, when 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas caught hold of the stirrup: Hadhrat Zaid requested the cousin of the Prophet not to bother, Ibn-e 'Abbas said, "We have been educated to respect our 'Ulama and elders in this way." Hadhrat Zaid kissed his hands in return and added, "We have been similarly instructed."

When a seeker calls on his Shaikh, he should remember the above quoted Divine command and the Companions' practice and refrain from knocking at his door. He should wait till the Shaikh comes out to meet people in his usual routine. However, in case of an urgency he should send in a word but should neither raise his voice nor insist on an early meeting.

A study of the Companions' code of behaviour shows that they were the ideal disciples. In their love, respect and devotion to the Holy Prophet, they set brilliant standards which will remain a beacon for the devout through the generations. They attained such perfection in this field, as is impossible to acquire, but worthy of imitation.

Tasawwuf is Decorum Personified

The relationship between the Shaikh and the seeker apparently resembles that of a teacher and a student, but in fact it is different. A student having no respect for his teacher in his heart may still acquire knowledge from him. But in the case of a seeker, the slightest lack of devotion towards the Shaikh shall preclude the beneficence. As the Shaikh turns his Tawajjuh to a devotee, he is receiving **ALLAH**'s Mercy and approval, simultaneously transmitting to the seeker. No matter how high a stage in the Path is attained by a seeker, like a kite in the hands of its flier, he remains under the absolute control of the Shaikh who retains the control irrespective of the height attained by the kite. Presently satellites aptly illustrate this point.

This relationship has been elaborated in 'Awarif al-M'aarif vol: II, p:16:

> Tasawwuf is decorum through and through, at all times, in all conditions, and at each stage. Whosoever holds it fast becomes a beloved of **ALLAH**, while whoever defaults is an imbecile, deprived of *His* Mercy.

There is yet another difference between conventional knowledge and Tasawwuf. The former can be acquired to some extent without a teacher, but it is impossible to tread the Path without the guidance of an accomplished Shaikh. Imam Razi in his commentary on a verse of al-Fatihah, namely: "*Show us the right path, the path of those whom You have favoured*" observes.

This verse implies that one cannot tread the right path unless he follows the illustrious pioneers. Books are of little use in the pursuit of the Path. It proves that in order to acquire enlightenment and virtue of manifestations, a seeker should follow an accomplished Shaikh who will guide him on the right path and protect him from every evil. This is so because the majority of mankind is imperfect, and human intellect alone is not capable of discovering Divine truths and distinguishing right from wrong. Therefore, it is imperative to find and follow an accomplished guide who will, by virtue of his mature wisdom, brighten the intellect of the novice and help him to attain heights of perfection and Divine blessings.

This comment highlights that without the guidance of an accomplished Shaikh the stages of the Path cannot be attained. The goal of a devotee is his communion with **ALLAH** *Who* has declared, “And those who believe, love **ALLAH** the most.” hence, **ALLAH** is the beloved of a true believer. The result is that **ALLAH** becomes the beloved of the devotee and vice versa on the analogy: “*He* loves them and they love *Him.*” As the Shaikh causes this connection, he too becomes the beloved of the devotee. However, manifestation of love for the Shaikh must remain within the limits of the Shari‘ah.

The devotee should not take his Shaikh for God, which is polytheism, nor prostrate before him, which is strictly forbidden by the Shari‘ah.

It is not necessary for a Shaikh to excel the seeker in knowledge and piety. However, it is essential that he should be an accomplished mystic. The account of Prophet Musa عليه السلام and Hadhrat Khidhar provides a fitting example. The former was far ahead in these two aspects but to acquire a particular knowledge he had to visit the latter.

It is important for the Shaikh to ensure that his devotee strictly follows all the norms of Shari‘ah, because to think of Tariqah devoid of the Shari‘ah is nothing short of hypocrisy and infidelity.

According to Jam‘a-e Karamat-e Aulia **ALLAH,** vol: I, p: 511 Shaikh Abu ‘Abbas declares that it is impossible to attain the high offices of Wali**,** Autad and Qutb without perfect devotion to the Prophet ﷺ and without following the commandments of the Shari‘ah.

Where a seeker, despite a long association with his Shaikh, does not cultivate familiarity with the Shari‘ah, fails to harbour respect for the tenets of Islam, and is not enthusiastic about following the commands of the Shari‘ah, be sure that both of them are victims of self-deceit and are trying in vain to deceive God.

Besides discharging the basic responsibility of enforcing the commands of the Shari'ah with all its obligations and impositions, and creating enthusiasm to follow the Sunnah, the Shaikh should evaluate the seeker's heart to assess its capacity and accordingly, coach him spiritually. The beginning should be made with especially the zikr *of His* personal Name i.e., **ALLAH.** When a farmer sows healthy seed in prepared soil, he reaps a bumper harvest. Similarly, when zikr of *His* name is securely embedded in the heart of the seeker, the Shaikh guides him to the various stages of the Path. Keeping in view the different dispositions and capacities of his disciples, the Shaikh puts some of them on Zikr-e Lisani, others on and yet others on Fana-o Baqa and higher stages of the Path. However, an accomplished Shaikh is competent to put all the disciples on from the very outset. But the attainment of higher stages of the Path will depend on individual capacity and effort. This will be exactly in conformity with the precept of the Prophet ﷺ: "Talk to the people according to their intellect."

Writes Shaikh Shahab ud-Din in his 'Awarif al-M'aarif, vol: I, p: 44:

> The status of a Shaikh is very high in Tasawwuf, because he deputises the Prophet ﷺ in inviting mankind to **ALLAH**. Therefore, it is obligatory on him to extend his call to all and sundry.

The spiritual uplift should be carried out with fatherly affection, nay, with still greater affection. Imam Razi in his Tafsir-e Kabir vol: VI, p: 261 comments:

> The Shaikh ranks higher in status than the parents because the latter protect their children from worldly afflictions while the former offers safety against the Hell-fire.

'Allama Ibrahim in his book 'Umdah at-Tahqiq fi Bashar as-Siddiq p: 330 asserts:

> Progeny is either lineal or spiritual. According to enlightened sufis the latter takes precedence over the former.

The reason is that a father looks after the physical upbringing and material provision of his children both mortal, while a Shaikh provides spiritual food through, both eternal and immortal; the relative superiority of the immortal is obvious. This discussion brings out that the Shaikh is a spiritual father besides being a teacher and above all, a transmitter of the legacy of Prophets.

Etiquettes for Drawing Beneficence

- The seeker must remember that only complete devotion to his Shaikh shall pave the way for beneficence and wholesome spiritual growth. In sufi terminology, it is called Tauhid-e Matlab (unity of purpose). According to Jam'a-e Karamat-e Aulia **ALLAH** vol: I, p: 248:

It is important for a seeker to be steadfast, nothing should deviate him from his purpose. He should remain fully devoted to his Shaikh, and even the appearance of Hadhrat Khidhar should not detract his attention.

This is conceivable only where the Shaikh is accomplished and the seeker earnest. When an earnest seeker follows an imperfect Shaikh and consequently receives no spiritual benefit, he should separate and search for an accomplished man. Otherwise he will be guilty of indulging in personality worship, however, if the Shaikh is not accomplished and the seeker is not earnest, their relationship is a farce, far removed from Tasawwuf and the Path. An accomplished Shaikh must be judged from the spiritual benefit his devotees are receiving. If the Shaikh has thousands of disciples but none is progressing spiritually, he is surely an impostor; it is obligatory for the seeker to leave him. An accomplished Shaikh, on the other hand, would retrieve and reform the delinquents bedeviled by the perversities of moral debasement and lift them to celestial heights.

- Be straightforward. Plain speaking is a very good habit. A seeker must refrain from telling lies in the presence of his Shaikh or about him in his absence.
- A seeker should never breach the Shaikh's trust. Nothing said by the Shaikh in confidence should be disclosed. A person who is not trustworthy in mundane matters cannot be entrusted with Divine secrets and spiritual offices - negligence in this matter may result in the loss of one's spiritual office.
- Whatever is held dear for one's self should also be held dear for the Shaikh.
- A seeker should listen to his Shaikh attentively and not insist on speaking himself. Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi once saw a man quietly serving his Shaikh, Abu Hifs Neshapuri and his comrades. On inquiry he was told, "This man serves the Shaikh and all of us. He has so far spent two hundred thousand Dirham (approximately fifty thousand rupees) but has not uttered a word in the presence of the Shaikh."
- He should never ask the Shaikh for promotion to a higher stage but bear in mind **ALLAH**'s command to Prophet Musa عليه السلام: "*(O Musa) I have preferred you above mankind, by My Messages and by My speaking (to you). So hold that which I have given you and be among the thankfull.*" Therefore, a devotee should be satisfied with the spiritual benefit he has received, should try to consolidate it, and be grateful to **ALLAH** *Who* has promised bigger rewards for the grateful.
- He should not stare at the Shaikh but pay attention to his Qalb and occupy his mind with or contemplate on the stages of the Path already attained.
- He should ask questions like a student with a view to learn and not for the sake of objection, because criticism of the Shaikh precludes beneficence.

Shaikh Shahab ud-Din in his ‘Awarif ai-M‘aarif asserts:

- A disciple who disregards the verdict of the Shaikh stands deprived of his beneficence. Whosoever negates his Shaikh’s behest will never succeed.
- If a seeker knows a better solution to a problem than the one proposed by the Shaikh, he should offer it as an alternative to be judged by the latter.
- He should not walk ahead of his Shaikh but follow the spirit of **ALLAH**’s command: ‘Be not forward in the presence of **ALLAH** and *His* Messenger,’ - which implies that to respect one’s patron is to respect **ALLAH** and the Prophet.
- He should offer some gift when calling on his Shaikh (no matter how trivial) in accordance with the Hadith, “Cultivate mutual love by the exchange of gifts.” However, it is essential that the Shaikh should not covet the wealth of his devotee, because this is indirect begging which is not permissible.
- The seeker should have the same regard for the deputy of the Shaikh, as for the Shaikh himself. In particular the deputies blessed with spiritual offices should be given utmost reverence within the bounds of the Shari‘ah, of course.
- In order to derive spiritual benefit, a seeker should adopt an attitude of modesty, and not dwell on his own accomplishments. The account of Prophet Musa and Hadhrat Khidhar is very instructive. Note how Prophet Musa framed his request: “May I follow you to the end, so that you may teach me right conduct of that which you have been taught?” A Muslim who fails to obey or follow in the footsteps (of the Prophet and his Companions) ceases to be human.
- According to Faidh al-Bari vol: III, p: 277:

  A dog attained the status of a man through the obedience of his master, while a man disobeying his master became worse than the dog. A quarry killed by a trained hound is treated as if slaughtered by a man. Here, a dog has assumed the status of a man. On the contrary, as man like Balam Ba‘or becomes worse than an animal, because of **ALLAH**’s disobedience.

- The Shaikh is entitled to the same esteem after his death as during his life; his relatives should also be given due respect.

- It is customary to rise on arrival of the Shaikh, though it is a disputed point. Due care should, therefore, be taken in this respect, as explained in Faidh al-Bari vol: IV, p: 65:

  Remember that it is permitted to stand up as a mark of respect when the Shaikh is coming towards you but not when he is going his own way.

Similarly, to kiss the hands of a teacher or a Shaikh is permissible but not the hands of a person, who has never washed them! However, to bow down or prostrate before a Shaikh is strictly forbidden.

CHAPTER-XXII

AL-KARAMAH

The Prophets occupy the most unique and distinguished position among **ALLAH**'s creation. They have been raised from time to time for the guidance of mankind. Last of all, came Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the religion was perfected. Every Prophet had to face innumerable hardships, many a time the entire society, including the rulers with all their might, rose against them to suppress their cause. They had no material resources, neither armies, nor wealth to face the material might pitched against them. To prove their truthfulness and supremacy, they were blessed with supernatural powers called miracles and history is replete with them. These miracles, together with their teachings, constitute the legacy that passes on to their spiritual descendants who are their true followers. Disobedience is often disinherited. The true follower of a Prophet is called a wali, and the aulia alone inherit the spiritual legacy of their Prophets. The miracle of a Prophet, when inherited by a wali, is called karamah. Just as the miracle is a credential of Prophethood, karamah is a testimonial of wilayah. In fact, the karamah of a wali is a miracle of his Prophet. Imam Razi in his Arba'in, (p: 376) explains:

> We maintain that piety is the most superior virtue because **ALLAH** declares. *The excellent among you is the one most pious.* That the karamah of a wali is related to piety proves that it cannot emanate from the delinquent. Indeed karamah and excellence will correspond directly to the degree of piety.

'**A**llama Sh'arani in his al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir (vol: II, p: 103) asserts that,

> Karamah is displayed by a wali who is a resolute follower of his Prophet and a distinguished personality in his community.

Therefore, it follows that a karamah cannot be displayed by anyone other than a righteous and ardent follower of the Prophet ﷺ, for he alone is a genuine spiritual descendant. 'Allama Sh'arani adds (vol: I, p: 165):

> **ALLAH** blesses his aulia with karamah, it is a type of miracle. A supernatural act is a miracle when performed by a Prophet and a karamah when performed by a wali.

Though a karamah apparently emanates from a wali, it is in fact the miracle of his Prophet.

Karamat-e Aulia Proved from Twatir

The aulia are not confined to any particular time or place but are present in all times and in every country, that is why all ages have witnessed their karamah. According to Faidh al-Bari (vol: IX. p; 198):

> The reports of a karamah are so continuous that they cannot be legitimately denied, only the wretched considers them impossible and indulges in falsification.

Imam Zahbi, in spite of being deeply committed to the opposition of sufis, dwelt on the subject in the following words in his Kitab al-'Alud al-'Arsh (p: 56):

> Take note that **ALLAH**, the Most Truthful, has informed us that Queen Bilqis owned a mighty throne. It was lifted by a subject of Prophet Sulaiman عليه السلام and brought to him in the twinkle of an eye. Hence only an ignoramus will deny the karamah of the aulia. There can be no bigger karamah than bringing a huge throne from a distant land, in the twinkle of an eye. It is beyond the domain of intellect, we believe in, and testify to the karamah of the aulia.

He goes on (p: 193).

> I heard Hafiz 'Abul Hassan quoting Shaikh 'lzz ud-Din bin 'Abdus-Salam, "No wali has shown as many karamah as Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani which have reached me through Twatir."

This discourse of Imam Zahbi highlights two points:

- The karamah of the aulia are proved from Twatir.
- Only an ignoramus will dare deny this fact.

Writes Ibn-e Hajr about Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani (Fatawa al-Hadithiah p: 174):

> **ALLAH**'s bounties showered on Shaikh Abdul Qadir are manifested through his gnosis and karamah, which have reached us through Twatir.

And Imam Yafai in his Kifayat al-M'utaqid p: 295:

> Some of the 'Ulama have said that the karamah of Shaikh Jilani have reached the limits of Twatir. I reiterate that his karamah are categorically proved because the narrators are numerous and all conditions of Twatir are met.

Imam Zahbi, Ibn-e Hajr and Imam Yafa'i agree that the karamah of Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani reach Twatir and it is obvious even to a novice that Twatir cannot be rejected.

‘**A**llama Sh‘arani in his Asni al-Matalib 111 Ahadith al-Mukhtalifah al-Maratib (p: 261) lists a maxim of Hadhrat ‘Ali, the final word on the subject: “Only an ass can deny karamah of the wali.”

The non-conformists are in the forefront in rejecting karamah. Besides, history records only two names of Ibn-e Hazm and Abu Is-haq Isfraeni who deny the ability of a wali to show karamah. If conceded, they argue that the reported karamah would amount to equation with the miracle which is an exclusive attribute of Prophets. This issue has been dwelt upon by Ibn-e Khaldun in his Muqaddimah (p: 451).

‘**A**llama Anwar Shah Kashmiri asserts in his Faidh al-Bari (vol: II, p: 61) that Ibn-e Hazm did not reject karamah. This is corroborated by Imam Ibn-e Taimiyah in his Kitab an-Nabuwwah in these words:

> In spite of his rejecting karamah, Ibn-e Hazm believes in the acceptance of a supplication. I say that when this acceptance is conceded as a supernatural act, where lies the dispute? This by itself is a karamah, hence its denial is meaningless.

This implies accepting karamah in essence and denying its nomenclature. A karamah can be the result of a supplication. In fact, a supplication more often than not, is a karamah, which is manifested on a specific request of a wali. The deputy of Prophet Sulaiman supplicated and the great throne instantly appeared in the court.

The denial of Abu ls-haq Isfraeni has been refuted by Ibn-e Khaldun in the following words:

> If conceded, it is an intellectual delusion that a karamah would equate with the miracle of a Prophet. Intellectual manipulations do not falsify truth, and are insignificant in the face of observations and facts. Karamah have been displayed by thousands of aulia, sufis, pious men of old and the Companions whose observations cannot be disproved. Any such attempt will not be due to intellectual suppositions, but out of sheer animosity, obduracy and obstinacy.

Let us now examine the difference between a miracle, a karamah, magic and soothsaying.

The Operative Difference. A Prophet is pious of soul, attributes and morals. He is virtuous and a benefactor of mankind; he calls people to **ALLAH** and guides them to righteousness; he is truthful and an instructor in piety; he strives for success in the life Hereafter and shuns things secular; he is ingenuous and just by nature. The soothsayer and the magician, on the other hand, are evil of soul and attributes. They harm mankind; they are evil doers, wicked, liars and mammon worshippers. Declares **ALLAH:**

> *Shall I inform you upon whom the devils descend? They descend on every sinful, false one.* (26:221-222)

The news emanating from devils will obviously be false. Only a delinquent shall receive inspiration from the devil.

- **The Material Difference.** The soothsayer depends solely on the whispers of the devil and evil spirits, as is evident from the foregoing Qur-anic verses. The miracle of a Prophet is neither caused nor acquired, e.g., the miracles of the illuminated hand of Prophet Musa and his staff were bestowed by **ALLAH** on the basis of his purity and piety.

- **The Extrinsic Difference.** Form is always contingent to its basic element. Where the matter is depraved, the form will also be similar. Soothsaying is subsidised and inspired by devils, hence its form is also devilish. The basis of a prophet's miracle is the Divine Power, its form will naturally be celestial.

- **Le Raison' D'etre.** The raisoir d'etre of an event is always subject to the concurrent environments. The drowning of Pharaoh and his forces was aimed at ridding Egypt of disbelief, polytheism, oppression and tyranny and, at the same time, emancipating the Children of Israel and blessing them with supremacy and eminence. This was the raison' d'etre of Prophet Musa's miracles.

- Soothsaying and Magic. Soothsaying and magic are acquired through personal endeavour, totally foreign to Prophethood and miracles.
- Soothsaying and magic do present uncommon and strange phenomena, which seem supernatural to those who have not acquired these arts. On the other hand, no man or jinn can produce the like of a prophet's miracle because it has been granted by **ALLAH** and cannot be acquired by endeavour.
- When a magician is pitched against an accomplished wali, not only does the effect of magic vanish but his entire paraphernalia is destroyed. This is precisely what happened to the magicians of Pharaoh. Their leader exclaimed while embracing the Faith: "We have many a time competed with magicians. At worst the effect of magic had disappeared. But never before did a six foot staff turn into a dragon and devour all of our paraphernalia and become a staff again."
- The effect of magic disappears as soon as the magician is inattentive. This is not so with a miracle. Faidh al-Bari (vol: IV, p: 390) records the incident of a boy who asked his father the proof of the Prophethood of Musa. The father replied, "Hold his staff when he is asleep: If it becomes a dragon, it is a miracle, otherwise it is magic."

  The boy tried, the staff instantly turned into a dragon, and he had a narrow escape.

In brief, the above explains the difference between a miracle, magic and soothsaying.

The Difference Between a Karamah and a Miracle

In fact, the karamah of a wali is the miracle of the Prophet whom he follows, as discussed earlier with reference to al-Yawaqit wal-Jawahir. Since the manifestation of a karamah by a wali depends upon total adherence to his Prophet, it would be considered as an offshoot of the miracle. In fact karamah applies only to those supernatural acts which are performed by a true follower of Shari'ah. A miracle does not take place at the discretion of a Prophet, the same is the case with a karamah. Both originate from the Almighty, *Who* for the demonstration of *His* Infinite Powers, selects the Prophets and the aulia.

There are two types of karamah: The first and only real one, which impresses the wise and the intellectual, is intrinsic or spiritual.

The greatest karamah of the aulia is total adherence to Shari'ah, perseverance and abstinence from whatever is forbidden by Shari'ah.

When this type of karamah influences the environment, people hitherto estranged with their Creator are attracted to *His* remembrance and *His* worship and the flames of faith light up in their bosoms. They are reminded of their duty towards **ALLAH** and *His* creation, vices disappear and interest in virtue is stimulated. A study of the history of the aulia reveals that single-handedly and under adverse circumstances, they succeeded in reforming thousands of deluded people including the ruling elite.

The second type is sensory or temporal, which impresses the masses. Because of their unenlightened state they cannot understand the spiritual or real karamah, their discernment is confined to things material and sensory. A person spent ten years in the service of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi but was disappointed and decided to leave. The Shaikh asked him the reason. He said, "You are reputed to be a great wali, but I have not witnessed a single karamah at your hands." The Shaikh asked him if he had seen any act of Junaid opposed to Sunnah. He replied in the negative whereupon the Shaikh remarked, "This fact by itself really constitutes the greatest karamah."

Some immature minds argue that when karamah is not at the discretion of a wali and Kashf-e Qubur is a kind of karamah, no wali can claim to be master of this science. Undoubtedly **ALLAH** is the Absolute Sovereign of all creation. Take the example of a human being; to create him, to fashion his physical body, to bless him with eyes and eye sight, all is within *His* power. With his eyes, he sees, unless there is something in between to obstruct visibility. With eyes and eyesight intact, he is capable of seeing things around him. Similarly, when the heart is blessed with insight, it starts observing subtle things like Angels, Jinn, the Recompense of the dead in their graves, Paradise and Hell in outline. Just as physical eyes are capable of seeing material objects, unless there is an obstruction, similarly internal eyes are able to observe subtle things unless **ALLAH** wills otherwise.

Under the guidance of an accomplished Shaikh, frequency of zikr generates insight, bringing in its trail blessings like kashf, ilham and intuition. Human intellect is unable to comprehend them hence they are rejected by the masses. As Ibn-e Khaldun remarks:

> The question of kashf and knowledge of the unseen is like the allegories of the Qur-an whose real meaning is not manifest except to the sufis. Those not inspired with the intuition of sufis cannot understand them. The lexicon has no suitable words to express the kashfi observations and the intuition of the sufis. The lexicographer confines himself to defining words connected with sensory perceptions. Fortunate indeed is the man, who having himself acquired attributes of sufis, interprets their utterances in the light of the Shari'ah. The safest course, however, is to refrain from discussing their affairs which are beyond the comprehension of the learned exoterics.

Mullah 'Ali Qari has rightly asserted that a person not possessing an excellence simply denies its existence.

Let us now discuss the karamah of some of the aulia. We have intentionally refrained, until now, from narrating the karamah of the Companions because wilayah pales into insignificance when compared with the status of Companionship:

- **Muhammad bin 'Abdullah bin Abi Almajad Ibrahim,** popularly known as al-Murshadi, settled in a village named Murshadi in Yemen after acquiring knowledge of both Shari'ah and Tariqah. This village was located on a route followed by pilgrims and other caravan.

- 'Allama Ibn-e Hajr writes in his Dar-raka Minah vol: IV, p: 462-464:

  "It is a small village on a desert track. Shaikh al-Murshadi had no servant, no cooking utensils, no one to light the fire. But he was known for his hospitality. He would serve food to every traveller according to his status." This was a living proof of **ALLAH**'s declaration:

  And Whosoever keeps his duty to ***ALLAH, ALLAH*** *will appoint a way out for him and will provide for him from (a quarter) where he has no expectation.* (65:3)

- In the same book, (vol: I, p: 463-486) he writes about a wealthy man named Bakhtamber as-Sabati, who had one hundred thousand servants, possessed a stable built at a cost of 95000 sterling and employed a hundred grooms to look after his horses. This gentleman used to visit al-Murshadi with all his household. Everyone was served with food of the same standard as in large towns like Cairo and Damascus.

- Imam Yafa‘i gives an eye witness account in his Mir‘at al-Janan (vol: IV, p: 293-296):

  “There was a small room. Whenever any wayfarer arrived, the saint went to this room and in a few minutes returned with food to the desire and taste of his guest. Among his visitors were rich men and high officials. He would at once feed large crowds, with the food of their individual tastes. I was myself looking for a special food that I cherished for a long time. I finally got it from al-Murshadi.”

- The saint once went on pilgrimage to Makkah. He announced that he would bear the entire expenses of the accompanying caravan. Imam Yafa‘i notes in the same book:

  One thousand Ashrafi (sterling) was spent every night and sometimes more. He spent twenty-six thousand Ashrafi in eight nights.

All these arrangements demand a highly efficient catering organisation and a large treasure; as stated earlier, he had neither. As for the possibility of presents and gifts, it is stated that he never accepted anything from anyone, and that he would personally do the service. None entered the aforesaid room. He would go in for a short while and come out with food of his guests’ liking. There were no other material resources. When Imam Ibn-e Taimiyah, a contemporary, heard of the saint he remarked that all that might have been the work of Jinn. He seems to have ignored **ALLAH**’s declaration quoted above ...*and will provide for him from (a quarter) where he has no expectation.*

➢ the descent of food from the heaven for Prophet lsa and

➢ the out-of-season fruits provided to Mary (May **ALLAH** be pleased with her).

- In fact this remark of the ‘Allama is contradicted by him in his own book Kitab an-Nabuwwah p: 265:

  There are persons for whom devils and the Jinn act as informers. The faithful, the monotheists and the godly people whose hearts are enlightened by *His* refulgence are dreaded by devils and the Jinn who cannot learn their secrets or overpower them: they rather avoid the righteous people.

- When the devils and the Jinn dread the aulia and cannot know what is in their bosoms, they cannot be expected to render them any service. Let us now have a look at the antecedents of Shaikh al-Murshadi. Imam Yaf‘ai in his Mir‘at al-Janan (vol: IV, p: 291) asserts:

  The Shaikh was an eminent wali, gifted with marvellous karamah, a spirited personality possessing admirable attributes and high moral character. An enlightened saint with qualities of unmistakable observation and manifestations.

- Imam Zahbi, normally a bitter critic of the sufis, has this to say about the Shaikh: "He would tell what was in peoples bosoms, was of sound belief, yet never claimed greatness."

Dar-raka Minah by 'Allama Hajr

- It is thus evident that Shaikh al-Murshadi was a man of such virtuous attributes that devils and Jinn could not touch him. Imam Yaf'ai comments at 'Allama lbn-e Taimiyah in these words.

  The Jinn cannot learn what is inside the bosoms of people. They do not know what lies in a human heart. I seek **ALLAH**'s refuge against such faithlessness as expressed by lbn-e Taimiyah.

- Judged by his own standard, the suggestion or conjecture of 'Allama lbn-e Taimiyah, therefore, stands rebutted. It should be noted here that once the Lataif of a seeker are illuminated properly and the three initial stages of the Path are thoroughly sustained, the Jinn can have no influence over him and the devils run away from him. His bosom attains the likeness of a heaven, with the Lataif twinkling like the stars. Just as meteors are used as Divine missiles to drive away devils, similarly the illuminated bosom of an enlightened person drives away the Jinn and the devils. How could the Jinn approach an accomplished saint like al-Murshadi and supply him food for his guests? Undoubtedly, therefore, what has been narrated about him is karamah and not the work of the Jinn, as 'Allama Ibn-e Taimiyah would have us believe. We end this account with another incident.

  An-Nasir, the Kiim of Egypt, used to visit Shaikh al-Murshadi. 'Allama **A**bdur-Rauf Manavi and Ibn Manavi are eye witnesses of these visits.

❖ **Muhammad bin Hamzah** - Real name Shams ud-Din. Besides being a spiritual reformer, he was an expert physician. He wrote a number of books on indigenous systems of medical science, in which his research is no less than a karamah. According to Jam'a-e Karamat-e Aulia **ALLAH** vol: I, p: 274:

- The herbs would call to inform him of their curative properties.
- When Sultan Muhammad, the conqueror, wanted to attack Constantinople, he invited the Shaikh to participate in the holy war. The Shaikh told his envoy, Ahmad Shah that the fort would be captured at 1100 hours on a certain date and the Muslims would enter therein. But as the appointed hour drew nearer, there were no signs of the conquest of the fort. A descendent of the Shaikh got worried lest the prediction not come true and the Shaikh be persecuted by the emperor. He ran to the Shaikh's tent, peeped in and saw him rising from prostration, saying. "**ALLAH** be praised that *He* blessed us with victory." The man looked back towards the fort and saw Muslim troops entering it. The Shaikh's supplication resulted in the crumbling of the fort wall.
- After the fort fell, the Shaikh was requested to help in discovering the grave of

Hadhrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (a renowned Companion who had fallen fighting there long ago). He replied that he could see Divine lights at a certain place, on reflection he pointed out the exact place of burial. He conversed with the Companion's spirit, who congratulated the Muslims on their success and thanked **ALLAH** that he was no longer in the hands of infidels. When the Sultan heard this, he requested the Shaikh to give some indication to provide some proof about his discovery. He pointed out the spot under which lay the head of the Companion and said. "After digging two feet of earth you will discover a white stone bearing an inscription in Hebrew." It was promptly dug out as predicted. The emperor was stunned and almost collapsed at its sight. He built a mosque there and also some apartments for the Shaikh. But the Shaikh declined and said that he preferred to live in his home town.

- **Umar bin Mubarik** - A pious and devout wali and a melodious orator. In Kifayat al-M'utaqid (p: 414) this incident is recorded about him:

  Once he went on pilgrimage. On arrival at the Prophet's tomb, he read out odes eulogising him and the first two caliphs. Soon after, a man came and extended an invitation to a feast in his house. He went along and as he took his seat, the man (a Shi'ite) pulled a sword and demanded, "Should I chop off your head or your tongue with which you eulogised Abu Bakr and 'Umar?" He reviled at him, cut his tongue and gave it over to him. The saint returned to the Prophet's tomb and wept. He fell asleep and saw the Prophet rejoining the chopped off tongue. He woke up to find his tongue in perfect condition. The next year, the saint again visited the tomb and repeated his performance. A man invited him, to the same house and entertained him. He then took him to another room where a monkey was tied to a pillar and said, "This is my father, mutated the night he cut your tongue, he has been tied to this pillar ever since. As I have also disavowed the Shi'ite creed, kindly pray for his restoration to the human form." The saint quietly left the place. Both of these incidents were, of course, his karamah.

- **Muhammad bin Yusuf Bolaqqi** - A woman came to him and said, "My child has been snatched away by some Abayssinians. They have taken him on board yonder and are sailing away." He shouted to the crew to restore the child to his mother, but in vain. He then ordered the ship to stop, the ship complied. He walked over the water up to the ship, recovered the child, returned to the shore and handed it over to the mother.
- **Abul Ghiath bin Jamil** - He took his Shaikh's donkey to a forest and collected firewood, meanwhile a lion killed the donkey. The saint got hold of the lion by the ear, put the firewood on his back and drove him to the town. He unloaded the firewood and bade the lion to return to the forest without harming anyone en route.

- ‘**Amir bin ‘Abdullah** - A caravan was moving through a jungle when a tiger appeared and blocked the route. The saint passed by and asked the travellers why they had halted, they pointed towards the tiger. He walked over, placed his hand on the tiger’s mouth till the caravan passed away safely.
- **Shaiban Rahi** - Sufyan Thuri once accompanied him on a pilgrimage to Makkah, on the way they encountered a tiger. Thuri felt afraid, whereupon Shaiban said, “Never mind, it is just another dog.” When the tiger heard this, he lowered his head and wagged his tail. Shaiban caught him by the ear but Sufyan advised him to avoid celebrity. He replied, “Had I not hated celebrity, I would have put my baggage on his back and taken him to Makkah.”
- **Shaikh ‘Abdul Qadir Jilani** - According to Fatawa al-Hadithiah (p: 174), Faidh al-Bari (vol: II, p: 16) and Kalid al-Jawahir:

- We know through continuous authentic sources that once the Shaikh ate a chicken, collected its bones and supplicated for its restoration to life. The chicken promptly became alive and started moving about as before it was slaughtered. This incident is described in the following words in Jam‘a-e Karamat (vol: II, p: 203),

  The saint put his hand on the bones of the chicken and said, “Rise by the Command of **ALLAH**,” and it did.

- One day he was delivering a sermon and a noisy kite caused interference. He remarked, “May **ALLAH** cut your throat.’ The kite collapsed and died. On conclusion of the sermon, seeing the kite lying dead in the courtyard of the Masjid (mosque), he said, “Rise by the Command of **ALLAH.**” The kite became alive and flew away.

  Faidh al-Bari (vol: II, p: 16) and Khazinat al-Israr (p: 25)

- The author of Faidh al-Bari, after narrating this incident speaks of a similar karamah, which he himself witnessed:

  A man came to Bijnore (in India) and beheaded a bird in the presence of a large crowd. Then he joined the neck to the body. The bird became alive and flew away.

- **Zunnun Misri** - The great traditionalist Abu Na‘eem writes in his Hilya al-Aulia, vol: IX, p: 366:

- I happened to go to the Nile and saw a woman crying hoarse, Zunnun went to her and asked the reason. She said that her child had been snatched away by a crocodile, the saint offered two rak‘at of prayer and supplicated. Then I saw the crocodile surface above the river and emit the child safe and sound on the shore. The saint gave the child over to the wailing mother.

- One day Zunnun was crossing a river in a boat. Someone lost a diamond which had fallen into the river. The owner suspected the saint and did not absolve him though he testified to his innocence. The saint was perturbed, turned towards **ALLAH** and expressed his helplessness. Shortly, a fish surfaced carrying the same diamond in its mouth.

This incident brought him the title of Zunnun (literally owner of the fish).

- **Ghauth Yusuf Hamdani Baghdadi** - The following incident, listed in his history by Ibn-e Khaldun and also contained in Kitab al-Mashru‘a ad-Dawi, is thus recorded in Karamat-e Aulia **ALLAH** vol: II, p: 529:

- According to Imam Abu Sa‘eed ‘Abdullah bin ‘Asrun: One day I along with Shaikh ‘Abdul Qadir Jilani and ‘Allama Ibn-e Saqa visited Yusuf Hamdani. En route, each one of us declared the purpose of his visit:

  Ibn-e Saqa said, "I will, in my heart, frame a question which the Shaikh will not be able to answer."

  Shaikh ‘Abdul Qadir said. God forbid that I ask such a question. I will sit by the saint in order to receive his blessing and beneficence.

  I said, "I will, in my heart, make a request to him." (It was for removal of his poverty).

- The saint addressed Ibn-e Saqa, "I see the fire of infidelity ablaze in you." Subsequent events proved it right. Ibn-e Saqa was invited by the emperor of Rome for a polemic and he performed impressively. He fell in love with the emperor's daughter and wanted her hand in marriage. The emperor agreed, provided he embraced Christianity, Ibn-e Saqa did so but was taken ill. The Christians then threw him out and he begged for food till his end. Per chance, an acquaintance of his passed by and recognised him. Seeing him at the point of death, he turned his face towards the K‘abah (as is done to every Muslim) but it immediately turned away from it. When asked whether he remembered any portion of the Qur-an he said he remembered only the verse:

  Those who disbelieve would wish ardently that they were Muslims. (15:2)

So he died and landed in Hell. Such is the retribution for insulting the aulia.

- To Shaikh ‘Abdul Qadir Jilani, the saint said. "A time will come when you shall stand on the pulpit of a Baghdad mosque and declare. ‘Here is my foot on the neck of all aulia.' (signifying superiority over all.)This was exactly what happened.

- Says Ibn-e ‘Asrun about himself. “I came to Damascus and was made the Minister of Auqaf by Sultan Nur ud-Din Shahid, I became a multimillionaire. Whatever the saint had predicted about the three of us, came true.”

Al-Mashru‘a ad-Dawi claims that this incident has not been related by one person but continuously by many over the generations. It cannot therefore, be denied.

◈ **Ibrahim Dasoti**, a Qutb - A woman came wailing to him and complained that her child was swallowed by a crocodile. The saint went to the river and called, “O! The swallower of the child, come out.” A crocodile promptly surfaced and came over to the Shaikh. He ordered him to spew the child which was complied with, the child was still alive.

A major karamah of the aulia is to speak to the dead or converse with the spirits. Records Jam‘a-e Karamat-e Aulia **ALLAH** (vol: 11. p: 409):

> By far the biggest karamah is spiritual presence in the court of the Prophet ﷺ**.** This is a high station in the Path and a token of **ALLAH**’s blessing.

All the elite aulia have been so blessed, by *His* grace, a number *of* friends in our Order are similarly favoured. Besides, there are hundreds who can converse with the spirits

CHAPTER-XXIV

THE OWAISIAH ORDER

The creation of man has been heralded in these solemn words; *Surely We created man of the best stature. Truly, We have honoured the children of Adam.* The elect of *His* creation, in this universe, have been blessed with the singular honour of *His* vicegerency on earth. Among *His* countless bounties, the greatest magnamity with which man has been blessed is the provision of guidance through *His* Prophets.

The last of them is Prophet Muhammadﷺ and with him the religion has been perfected: *This day, I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favour to you.* The believer is reminded of this favour; *Allah truly has shown grace to the believers by sending them a Messenger of their own.* Elaborating this grace *He* says: *He recites to them the revelations, makes them grow (spiritually) and teaches them scripture and wisdom.* The execution of this mission by the Holy Prophetﷺ produced such a perfect example of humanity, the like of which will not be seen again till Doomsday. They were the Companions who compiled the Shari'ah, passed on the teaching of the Scripture as well as the methods of soul purification and spiritual growth to the coming generations.

In the beginning, a Companion or Tab'i wherever he went, undertook the reformation of society, according to the tenets of Islam. But, with the passage of time, the compilation of all aspects of the prophet's mission took an organized shape. The mission pertaining to spiritual growth, when organized, came into vogue in the shape of four well known Sufi Orders, namely Qadriah, Naqshbandiah, Suharwardiah and Chishtiah. The basic principle in all cases, however, remained the same, the frequency of zikr, though in different forms. It is possible that this variation was due to differences in climatic conditions, dispositions, and habits, just as an expert physician adopts different methods in the administration of one and the same medicine to people of different dispositions.

In these major Sufi Orders, two aspects always attracted special attention. First, the method of inner purification and second, the continuity of the chain of transmission up to the Prophetﷺ. Obviously, every Shaikh in the said chain, who learnt this art from his immediate predecessor must have been granted permission by him to disseminate it to others. This, in sufi terminology, is called the Robe of Permission and assumes different forms. If it is established that a particular Shaikh did not attain beneficence from another, the chain will not be valid because of discontinuity.

This is a generally accepted principle. However, physical association with the predecessor is not an indispensable proposition, because spiritual growth pertains to the spirit. And, reception of beneficence does not necessarily depend on its association with the body. There are numerous examples of receiving beneficence without a physical meeting. For example, Abu Hassan Kharqani derived spiritual beneficence from Ba Yazid Bustami and also got a Robe of Permission from him, although the latter had died a hundred years earlier. Obviously, they were not contemporaries and there had been no

physical association to have eased spiritual training and obtaining a Robe of Permission. This proves that this instruction was imparted spiritually.

In sufi terminology acquisition of beneficence from the spirit is called an Owaisiah method. It does not at all mean that this line of attribution is traceable to Hadrat Owais of Qarn, Owaisiah here means deriving benefit entirely from the spirit. These two are distinctive characteristics of the Owaisiah Order. The term, Owaisi, has been adopted because the great saint Owais of Qarn did not have the privilege of the Holy Prophet's company, but attained beneficence from his spirit. He may well, therefore, be called the first Owaisi.

Ours is the Naqshbandiah Owaisiah Order because I impart spiritual instructions on the lines of the Naqshbandiah Order. I have personally drawn spiritual beneficence and received the Robe of Permission on Owaisi lines from my honourable Shaikh, who died four hundred years ago. The blessing of my Shaikh is now spreading throughout the world. Allah be praised!

True Tasawwuf is like a water conduit flowing underground, occasionally sprouting up like a fountain and irrigating the land. It sometimes disappears from the face of the earth. Then Allah, in His infinite mercy sends His bondsmen, who act as a fountain of Tasawwuf and the Path to irrigate the hearts of mankind. That is why the Owaisiah Order does not appear to be continuous though, in fact, it is a continuum. Those unacquainted with the reception and transmission of beneficence by the spirit cannot obviously discern this reality and out of shallow vanity raise silly objections.

Shah Wali Ullah in his Asha‘t al-Lam‘at Sharah al-Mishkat (p: 86) praising the Owaisiah Order writes that it is the spiritual Order fastest in producing the desired effects and that its devotees are men of great munificence and awe. At page 63 he states that the Owaisiah Order "is indeed a world of spirits abridged." And on page 21:

> In the chain of saints, there is an Order called Owaisiah, handed down by Khawajah Owais Qarni. He received beneficence directly from the Holy Prophet's spirit. So did one of the greatest saints of the Indian sub-continent, namely Shaikh Badr ud-din.
>
> This shows that:

- An Owaisi is the one who derives spiritual beneficence from the spirit of a wali.
- Many renowned aulia have drawn beneficence from the spirits of their predecessors.
- The adherents of this Order also draw spiritual beneficence direct from the Prophet and by *His* grace, I am one of them.

What really worries the ignorant is the question of whether it is possible for a spirit to receive and transmit beneficence. This can be solved in two ways, either one should trust those who know or try one's self. The second course can be adopted only by one who sincerely desires to attain inner purification. The first can, however, be illustrated by a few quotations:

- Fatawa-e Azizah vol: 1, p: 93 by Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlawi. The said was asked whether it was possible for a man of kashf to draw spiritual beneficence by meditating at the grave of a wali? He answered, "Yes." (Brevity being the major consideration in a verdict, the savant gave a brief answer). A detailed reply is given in his Treatise Shifa al-'Alil (p:178) as under:

  When asked as to why Shaikh Abu 'Ali Farmadi who had a spiritual connection with Abu Hassan Kharqani has not been listed in the said Treatise, he replied, "This connection was Owaisiah whereas in the treatise only those aulia have been mentioned whose physical association with their predecessors has been proved. The fact, however, remains that the Owaisiah connection is very strong and perfectly accurate."

Shaikh Abu 'Ali Farmadi derived spiritual beneficence from Abu Hassan Kharqani who in turn received it from Ba Yazid Bustami. The last named saint received spiritual instruction from J'afar Sadiq. This fact had been mentioned by Khawajah Muhammad Parsa in his Treatise Qudsiah in the following words:

> J'afar had spiritual connection with his maternal grandfather Qasim bin Muhammad bin Abi Bakr, who was connected to Hadrat Salman Farsi, who in turn had a connection with Hadrat Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, who had this connection with the Holy Prophetﷺ.

The same Chain of Transmission had been listed in Tazkirah tur-Rashid (vol: 2, p: 108) with the addition that the Owaisi connection is termed as Siddiqiah Naqshbandiah Nizamiah Quddusiah.

- He adds that the stronger connection which Imam Rabbani had with Shaikh 'Abdul Quddus Ganghoni with regard to spiritual beneficence was due to the fact that besides being an Owaisi, the learned Shaikh probably had his connection with the four major Sufi Orders.

Tazkirah tur-Rashid vol: 2 p: 109

- Fatawa Dar al-'Ulum Deoband (vol: 1, p: 140) comments on Shifa al-'Alil:

  This shows that the Owaisiah connection means spiritual beneficence and that it is a strong and genuine connection. It also shows that it is not necessary for an Owaisi to be a disciple of Owais of Qarn. It is also wrong to deny this connection,

because Owais of Qarn received spiritual beneficence from the Holy Prophet ﷺ without physically enjoying his company and that is why anyone receiving beneficence from a spirit is termed an Owaisi.

‘**A**qa‘id-e ‘Ulama-e Deoband is a pivotal Treatise which expounds the Deobandi creed. Question no. 11 is about drawing beneficence from a spirit. The ‘Ulama of Deoband declare that they are not only convinced of, but testify to, the veracity of drawing spiritual beneficence from saints, dead or alive. This involves a special process known to the aulia, the sufis and the elite. It is little known to the masses.

These are scholarly answers to the question pertaining to reception and transmission of beneficence by the spirit. The second form is intuitive. Any aspirant is welcome, if he is earnest, sincere and capable of distinguishing between idle talk and practical acquisition. It is the practice which yields results and not the vain gossip:

From the explanations of veteran sufis and righteous ‘Ulama, it has been proved that receiving and transmitting beneficence by the spirit is not only a possibility but a proven reality. Visual or physical meeting is not a condition, but the continuity is a definite requirement.

A famous Pir of Multan once told one of my devotees that the Owaisiah Order lacks continuity. The latter retorted, “Yes, an Order where the Shaikh ushers hundreds into Barzakh and the Prophet’s ﷺ audience to receive bai‘at at his sacred hands, exemplifying, *Surely! Those who swear allegiance to you swear allegiance to Allah,* appears discontinuous. Whereas, the Order in which a seeker spends a lifetime in the service of his Shaikh, who fails to initiate even his Qalb is considered to have a connection! You are most welcome to adhere to that junction which precludes your access to the Prophet ﷺ and we are happy with such disconnection as enables us to perpetually remain in his audience.”

May **ALLAH** bless us with the great bounty of genuine understanding of our Faith. – Amin.

THE FINAL WORD

It is our firm conviction that devotion to the will and purpose of **ALLAH** is contingent upon the respect of *His* commandments and kindness towards *His* creation, as declared by *Him:*

> *Lo! **ALLAH** is with those who keep their duty to Him and those who are doers of good.* (16:128)

The best among the virtuous acts is the constancy in those deeds which manifest *His* Glory and earnest endeavour to benefit *His* creation. In the realm of *His* servitude, non-Divine ties are nearer to idolatry. That is why the people of the Path call it covert polytheism. For them, there are two stages: the beginning and the end. The first symbolises engagement in Divine servitude, and the other freedom from dependence on means and entrusting everything to the Causer of all causes. This is called 'trust in *Him*'.

These two stages have been described in the Qur-an in these words:

> *So worship Him and put your trust in Him.* (11:123)

In fact, this is a word of caution that no one can claim to possess perfect faith until he overlooks causation and reposes full trust in the Causer. This is because mundane love and celestial bliss do not go together, an increase in one will cause corresponding decrease in the other; worldly achievements require wholehearted attention. It is not possible to attain felicity of the life of the Hereafter without clearing the heart of all non-Divine impulses and reserving it wholly for *His* love, which cannot co-exist with worldly love. To get totally engaged in worldly affairs is the attribute of those destined to perdition, many Ahadith and sayings of the Companions support this contention.

A human being, in his earthly existence, is like a trader, whose mission is to acquire eternal bliss in exchange for *His* obedience. It is obvious that the sole object of man's creation is *His* worship, as declared by *Him:*

> *I created the Jinn and mankind only that they might worship Me.* (51:56)

Worship aims at attainment of *His* Love, as elaborated in the Hadith: "When *My* slave seeks *My* nearness through supplemental acts, *I* start loving him." Naturally, the heart abrim with *His* Love, will be held by *Him* in high esteem. The spokesman of the heart is the tongue which, in turn, is authenticated by the organs of the body, both having their respective purifiers.

When a person confesses, “I surrender to the will and purpose of **ALLAH**”, he claims the presence of **ALLAH**’s Love in his heart. But he must corroborate his claim by his conduct. Now if he spends his life and his wealth in the way of **ALLAH** and purifies his deeds by divorcing all non-Divine love, he substantiates his confession. Only then can his name be put on the roll of *His* lovers and he joins the group of those near to *Him*. **T**owards this truth, points *His* declaration:

> *Do men imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say, “We believe,” and will not be tested with affliction.* (29:2)

The wisdom of the devout differs from the love of a mystic: One is afraid, and the other fond of the Hereafter.

The Chain of Transmission

The Holy Prophet Muhammad
(Sall **Allah**-o ‘Alaihi wa Sallam)

Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq
(Radhi **Allah**-o ‘Unho, d. 13H)

Hadhrat Imam Hassan al Basri
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi, d. 110H)

Hadhrat Dawood Tai
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi)

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi, d. 297 H)

Hadhrat Obaid Ullah Ahrar
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi, d. 895 H)

Hadhrat Maulana Abdur Rahman Jami
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi, d. 898 H)

Hadhrat Abul Ayub Muhammad Saleh
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi, d. late 10 cent H)

(Sultan ul-Arifeen) Hadhrat Allah Din Madni
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi)

Hadhrat ‘Abdul Rahim
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi, d. 1372 H)

Hadhrat Maulana Allah Yar Khan
(Rahmat **Allah** ‘Alaihi, d. 1404 H)

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Akram Awan
Present Shaikh of the Order.